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Macalester Today Spring 2010

Macalester College

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Macalester

Today

INSIDE:

SPRING 2010

- Sustainable Tourism
- College Admissions, 21st Century-style
- The Alternative
Dr. Sam



Species DEFENDER

BIOLOGY PROFESSOR MARK DAVIS SAYS NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS AREN'T ALL BAD. SEE PAGE 12

Macalester Today

SPRING 2010

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Biology professor Mark Davis contends that non-native species are not always bad.

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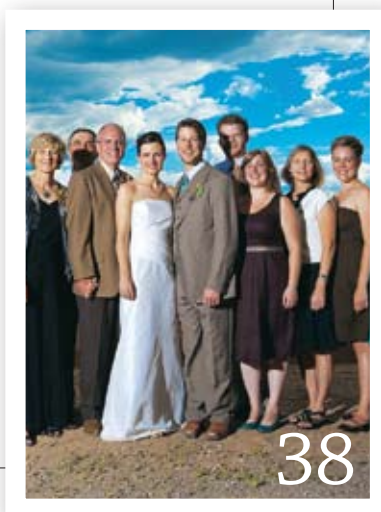
Hoops economists, surfer/researcher student, bikes from the library, and other campus matters.

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ON THE COVER: Biology professor Mark Davis (photo by Darin Back)

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Letters

Great design

I just received the Winter 2010 issue of *Macalester Today*, and the look of this issue caught my eye right away. It seemed to contain some new graphic elements or perhaps I just never noticed them until now. At any rate, I wanted to let you know how impressed I was. What I specifically noticed and appreciated was more use of color; more use of illustrations; a heavier emphasis on photographs and illustrations; a layout that invites readers to engage with the articles and guides the eye effectively across the page and through the magazine; and more, shorter articles that pulled me in. The writing remains, as always, outstanding. Keep up the good work!



Asa Tomash '95
Munich, Germany

New ambassadors?

What a wonderful notion—gathering up a clutch of young minds and going off across this great land to see what happens (“Global Road Trip,” Winter 2010). Professor Lane-gran’s suggestion to revive the Ambassadors for Friendship program is a good idea at a time when introspection and cynicism are suffocating our nation. Such a giddy ritual of exploration is needed to revitalize the soul, not only of we Americans but also of those who touch our shores. And its unpredictability is sorely needed also, at a time when advance planning and logistics rule the roost. From my vantage point in Minnesota, it doesn’t take much imagination to see the tough industrial cities of the Midwest, the hidden coulees of the Mississippi Valley, the hills of Appalachia, and the Pacific, too. Get out there, you guys. I may well join you.

William Werner, Jr. '77
Mounds View, Minnesota

Re-entry shock revisited

Your article “Reentry Shock” (Winter 2010) was enlightening and informative. It deals with a condition that many of us have experienced. When I returned to Mac in 1972 after spending a year in West Africa, I, too, went through some traumatic changes for which

there was no diagnosis, treatment, or counseling at that time. During my remaining years at Macalester I occasionally struggled with depression and a lack of focus. It’s good to see that today the difficult as well as the positive side of the study abroad experience is being recognized and dealt with.

Alan Green '74
Germantown, Maryland

Stereotyping feminists

I was stunned to see the unfortunate perpetuation of the stereotype that feminists don’t wear makeup in Andy Steiner’s essay (“Style Derby,” Fall 2009). I expected much better from a Mac publication. Clearly it’s worth repeating: Feminists come in all ages, sizes, colors, nationalities, and levels of education. At least half the feminists I know are men and, yes, they generally do not wear makeup. I hope Mac is riddled with feminists of every variety, especially the variety who recognize and reject stereotyping of every kind.

M.E. DeJonge-Benishek P '13
Fond du lac, Wisconsin

Climate commitment questioned

In his “Household Words” column (Winter 2010), President Rosenberg makes a strong case as to why it is appropriate for him to keep his personal opinions to himself because of his position as a college president. He then goes on to cite two cases in which he believed it was appropriate for him to override these considerations and take a public position, because those two issues were “directly relevant to our work as a college.”

He should have taken his own advice and kept his personal opinions to himself.

While one could argue that “to practice and model environmental responsibility” is “directly relevant to our work as a college”—it is a huge leap from that statement to signing the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment and all that entails. As stated in a September 17, 2009, Macalester press release, “the lead supporting organization of the initiative is the national

nonprofit Second Nature.”

In today’s Internet age, there is no need for me to quote extensively from the Second Nature website (secondnature.org/policy). To summarize:

- 1) They are strongly anti-nuclear power (which is not consistent with their professed goal of carbon neutrality).
- 2) They are a lobbying group whose primary purpose is to use the imprimatur of college and university presidents to back up their funding requests (see Policy Priority #1—to secure a grant of \$25 million).
- 3) Most of their initiatives burden the U.S. taxpayer with additional costs to support their agenda, whether by direct taxation (“support a national carbon tax”), onerous regulations (“support national cap and trade legislation”), or just flat out spending (“increased federal funding for adaptation to climate change”).

In conclusion, President Rosenberg and the college are being used by this group to further a highly politicized agenda, disguised as “environmental responsibility.”

Jim Noran '74
Montclair, New Jersey

Corrections

A group photo shown on page 37 of the Winter 2010 issue has James Robinson '81 and Dwayne Williams '89 reversed. Robinson appears second from the left and Williams appears on the far right of the group.

LETTERS POLICY

We invite letters of 300 words or fewer. Letters may be edited for clarity, style, and space and will be published based on their relevance to issues discussed in *Macalester Today*. You can send letters to llamb@macalester.edu or to *Macalester Today*, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105.



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From St. Paul to Seoul

BY | **BRIAN ROSENBERG**

The longstanding commitment to having a thoroughly internationalized campus at Macalester has always been a distinctive institutional strength and something of an institutional challenge. The strength, of course, arises from the benefits to every student of being surrounded by classmates of varied backgrounds and cultures; the challenge arises from the commitment of energy and resources necessary to bring to Macalester students from more than 80 countries and every socioeconomic class. This is a challenge we have by and large embraced and overcome.

Similarly, having a very international alumni population offers both benefits and challenges. The benefits accrue to our students—and our reputation—from having well-placed and successful alumni in virtually every part of the globe. The chief challenge is maintaining close contact with an alumni population geographically so far removed from our St. Paul campus. Given the importance of alumni stewardship of the college, this is a challenge we must work to confront.

This is why I traveled in January to four East Asian cities—Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Seoul—with substantial populations of Macalester alumni, parents, and potential students. The highlight of each city visit was a gathering of the local Macalester community. The trip also included meetings with individual alumni and parents and visits to schools such as the American School in Japan, the Singapore American School, and the United World College in Singapore.

Here are some of the important things I discovered. Alumni and parents in each city I visited feel deeply indebted to Macalester and are fiercely proud of the college's commitment to a global perspective. They would like to feel more closely connected to the college today and are anxious to find ways to support our work and particularly our current and future

students. Virtually without exception, the alumni attribute their current success and outlook in large part to their experiences at Macalester with faculty and staff members and fellow students.

Here is the most important thing I discovered—or, maybe more accurately, had reconfirmed. Members of the extended Macal-



President Rosenberg with the Macalester group's Tokyo co-host Tak Masamura '93.

ester community feel bound together in ways that transcend cultural, religious, and social boundaries. They model in their interactions with one another, and indeed in the quotidian interactions that form their personal and professional lives, the kind of civility, empathy, tolerance, and compassion that seems today in desperately short supply. They are citizens of their communities, their countries, and the globe—and our world would be an infinitely better place if there were more of them.

The trip reaffirmed my belief in the entwined responsibilities inherent in being at

Macalester and being part of that broader community of Macalester alumni and parents. Those of us at the college must continue to find ways in the face of a very difficult global economy and a challenging environment for higher education to sustain and improve upon our historic mission. The most powerful evidence of all—not surveys or data but the lived experience of our graduates—tells us that we are doing the right thing. How can we do it better? How can we be sure to adapt Macalester's focus on academic excellence, internationalism, diversity, and social responsibility to the world we live in today? These are questions that the faculty and administration of the college should be asking every day.

Upon those who have benefited and continue to benefit from the work of Macalester falls the responsibility to support and steward this special institution. I seldom use this column to make pitches, but I feel utterly unabashed in saying that Macalester is an institution that merits its alumni's commitment of time and resources. This is true whether one lives in St. Paul or Seoul; it is true whether one graduated in 1959 or 2009. Generations of faculty and staff, trustees and donors, have given of themselves so that we can educate gifted people to live fulfilling lives and make a difference in the world. For this to continue—and it must continue—those people must turn their eyes and hearts back to the college and do all they can to sustain it.

Thank you to those many alumni and parents who took the time to meet with me during my recent travels. Thank you to the much larger group whose support of Macalester makes my job a privilege for which I am infinitely grateful. ■

BRIAN ROSENBERG, the president of Macalester, writes a regular column for Macalester Today. He can be reached at rosenbergb@macalester.edu.

Asian Inspired

President Brian Rosenberg leads visit to Asia

“GEOGRAPHY ALONE MEANS that we don’t often see or hear from alumni living in Asia, but the truth is that they are very interested in Macalester; they want to know what’s happening and they want to be involved,” President Brian Rosenberg says, summing up a recent four-city visit to the region (see also Household Words, p. 3).

Despite a rich history of educating students from Asia, connecting with alumni in the region has been challenging—something college leaders and alumni living in Asia both want to change. It has been eight years since a Macalester president has visited the region. The January visit included individual meetings and receptions in four cities: Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Seoul. More than 150 alumni and parents participated.

“The level of enthusiasm for the college is extremely gratifying,” says Rosenberg. “Alumni and parents in Asia share a common interest in wanting to know what Macalester is like for current international students, and in connecting with each other and the college.”

During the trip, Rosenberg also visited with prospective students at three schools from which Macalester recruits. Alumni are interested in seeing Macalester continue to attract students from the region.

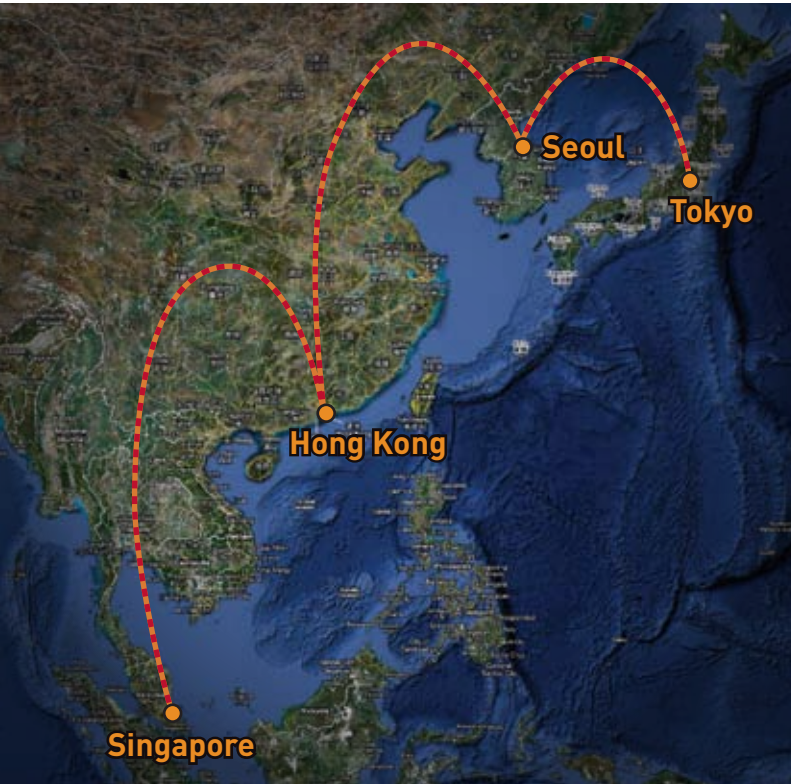
Rebecca Schubring, director of principal gifts, joined Rosenberg on the trip. Dr. Carol Rosenberg and Tommy Bonner, vice president for advancement, took part in the Tokyo and Hong Kong legs. Rosenberg also thanks the gracious event hosts in each city: Tak Masamura '93 and Jon and Sachiko Kindred P '09, in Tokyo; Ming Shu '93 and Wincy Wing-Sze Wu '98 in Hong Kong; Rafael Carrillo '95 and Tushar Doshi '90 in Singapore; and Peter Song Ho Hill '85 in Korea.

This year, Macalester has more international students from China than from any other country, suggesting that the college’s roots in Asia will continue to be strong into the future. ■



Above: President Rosenberg at a Singapore reception with (from left) cohost Rafael Carrillo '95, cohost Tushar Doshi '90, and Na Yeon Oh '07. **Below:** Prospective students and high school counselors at United World College of Southeast Asia meet with President Rosenberg.





Above: Peter Song Ho Hill '85, shown here with President Rosenberg, served as the host for the Seoul event. **Below:** Director of principal gifts Rebecca Schubring and President Rosenberg with Macalester parents in Singapore.



Summit to St. Clair

CAMPUS NEWS SUMMARY



Surfer, Swimmer, Researcher

One of the best things about Macalester is how interesting, smart, and multitalented its students are. Here's one we recently ran across.



PHOTOS: DARIN BACK

Name: Jeffrey Yamashita

Class: 2011

Hometown: Honolulu

Major: History, American studies

Scholarship: Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship

Project: “Minority Cannon Fodder: Japanese American and Korean Resistance During World War II”—a transnational comparative study of gender norms and citizenship between Japanese Americans and their relationship with the American military and Koreans in the Japanese Imperial Army

Family ties: Yamashita is part of the fifth generation of his Japanese American family to live in Hawaii. Two of his great uncles served in the famous 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the highly decorated Japanese American unit that rescued the “lost battalion” in WWII

Sports: Although he played only water polo in high school, Yamashita is now captain of both the men’s water polo team and the men’s swim team. He has three top 10 times in Macalester history (50 free, 100 free, 100 fly) and was awarded an NCAA leadership award in May 2009.

Future plans: Aspires to be accepted into the ethnic studies graduate program at the University of California at Berkeley

Other: Loves to surf, hopes to return to Hawaii someday (who wouldn’t?)

School Change Center at Mac

THE CENTER FOR SCHOOL CHANGE, a nationally known program to improve K-12 education, moved to Macalester in January. Says Provost Kathleen Murray, "We're looking forward to developing mutually beneficial connections, building on the strengths of our Educational Studies Department and other academic programs, and increasing student engagement in our local schools. Simply put, it's a win-win for both the center and Macalester."

The Center for School Change, founded and led by Joe Nathan, was established at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in 1990. Under a new agreement, Macalester will house the program, which includes two staff people, and act as its fiscal agent.

Murray explains that Macalester students will benefit from the new relationship through expanded access to community-based research, internship, and service opportunities in K-12 schools; involvement in new types of educational research; opportunities to forge new partnerships with communities and foundations; and increased national visibility as home to innovative K-12 policy research

"We chose Macalester because its commitment to service and academic rigor complements the center's mission and values," says Center for School Change director Joe Nathan. "We're excited about the op-

portunities this new partnership with one of the nation's leading liberal arts colleges brings to the center."

The Center for School Change has a record of successfully working with educators, parents, and others to increase student achievement, raise graduation rates, improve student attitudes toward learning, and strengthen communities by building stronger relationships. Current center projects include work with governors in six states and with public schools in a number of communities to help increase achievement and the percentage of college-ready high school graduates.

The center is funded entirely by grants and contracts. It has received support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, the State of Minnesota, and the Annenberg, Blandin, and Rockefeller foundations, among others. In January the center won a new \$2 million Cargill Foundation grant aimed at significantly improving the academic and operational performance of Minneapolis area charter public schools serving a high percentage of students from low-income families.

The new relationship is budget-neutral to Macalester; the center will cover the full cost of its space, as well as the grants administration and other fiscal services that Macalester will provide.



PHOTO: ROBIN LIETZ

Reader Survey: What you said

THANKS to those of you who responded to our reader survey. The results are in: *Macalester Today* is an important source of information and strengthens your connections to the college:

✓ **98 percent** of respondents get all, most, or some of their information about the college from *Macalester Today*

✓ **85 percent** agree or strongly agree that *Macalester Today* strengthens their personal connection to the college

✓ Readers love class notes, alumni, controversy... followed by student, institutional, and research topics

✓ **90 percent** read every or most issues of the magazine; up from 88 percent in a 2007 alumni survey

✓ *Macalester Today* gets high marks for quality, with more than 80 percent ranking it good or excellent for writing, photography, content, cover, design, and ease of reading

✓ **83 percent** have taken an action as a result of reading *Macalester Today*, with the largest percentage reporting having made a donation (respondents could choose more than one action)

- **38 percent:** Made a donation
- **36 percent:** Contacted a classmate or friend
- **36 percent:** Saved an article or issue
- **34 percent:** Submitted a class note
- **33 percent:** Discussed an article or issue
- **32 percent:** Visited the college Web site
- **31 percent:** Attended an event
- **28 percent:** Recommended Mac to a potential student or family member
- **7 percent:** Volunteered
- **7 percent:** Wrote a letter or email to the editor or college

Opportunities for improvement

The survey results will also help us make targeted improvements to *Macalester Today*. We will redouble our efforts to ensure the magazine reflects a variety of experiences and features alumni from all walks of life. As well, we know you value hearing as much about the challenges the college faces as its successes.

Summit to St. Clair

CAMPUS NEWS SUMMARY

Hoops Economists

With 36 different majors at Macalester, why are 60 percent of the men's basketball players with declared majors studying economics? Is Jane Kollasch, economics department coordinator and longtime official men's basketball scorekeeper, secretly recruiting?

Jerry Kraus '10 (Bucharest, Romania), a four-year athlete on Mac's basketball team, has another theory: "Some of the players see older players who are econ majors and end up taking a course. Then they get hooked." Head basketball coach Tim Whittle, himself a finance and management undergrad, postulates, "In both basketball and business, you have to be analytical and quick to understand the point of view and the strengths and weaknesses of your opponents and teammates, and work together as a team to use that knowledge to your advantage."

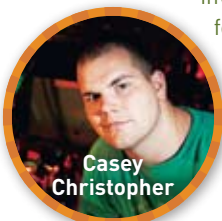
Economics professor Pete Ferderer offers his own theory: "Basketball players and economists share an appreciation for the value of efficiency and efficient resource allocation. If [Timberwolves player] Kevin Love is shooting 15 percent and Al Jefferson is shooting 30 percent, you get the ball to Al."

In another athletics and

academics alignment, five of the Mac football offensive linemen are chemistry students; four are majors and one, a first-year student, has yet to declare. **Casey Christopher '10** (LaGrange, Illinois), headed to a PhD chemistry program, ponders the "why": "Mentally they're similar. On the offensive line, you need to



Jerry Kraus



Casey Christopher



Nate Juergens



Scott Petesch

know the snap count, your assignment, and what the defense is playing before you can execute. Likewise, working a problem in chemistry involves drawing on different models to get the right perspective on the problem."

Chemistry professor Tom Varberg ventures no explanation but observes, "Being an offensive lineman and being a chemistry major are both tough jobs. You don't sign up for them lightly, as in, 'Not sure what I'll major in, maybe I'll pick chemistry' or 'I'm thinking about a sport at Mac, maybe I'll be an offensive lineman.' It doesn't happen that way!"

What about the men's soccer team, where at least nine members intend to major in biology? Two teammates, **Nate Juergens '11** (St. Paul) and **Scott Petesch '10** (Rockville, Maryland), have done cutting-edge biology research using DNA barcoding to identify animals. Head men's coach Ian Barker says, "I'm sure we may have a 'legacy' effect. That said, we also have good numbers in other majors—one of our '09 grads is working on a master's in music composition."

New Volleyball Coach

MACALESTER'S NEW HEAD VOLLEYBALL coach **Annie Glieber** has her priorities straight: "Academics come first," says the former national Division I athlete and two-time Division III Midwest Conference Coach of the Year.



Annie Glieber

Glieber has just finished five years as head volleyball coach at Carroll University in Waukesha, Wisconsin. At Carroll, Glieber rebuilt a last-place Midwest Conference team and guided the Pioneers to the 2007 MWC conference and conference tourney championships and the program's first-ever berth in the NCAA playoffs. She was selected by her peers as Midwest Conference Coach of the Year following the 2006 and 2007 seasons. She also served as director of the recreation sports program at Carroll.

The Milwaukee native, who played for an NCAA Division I team during college, has a master's degree in physical education from the University of Central Missouri. She reports having been wowed by the athletic facilities on her first visit to Macalester. "The Leonard Center is amazing," she says, adding that she was particularly impressed by how the center serves the entire campus.

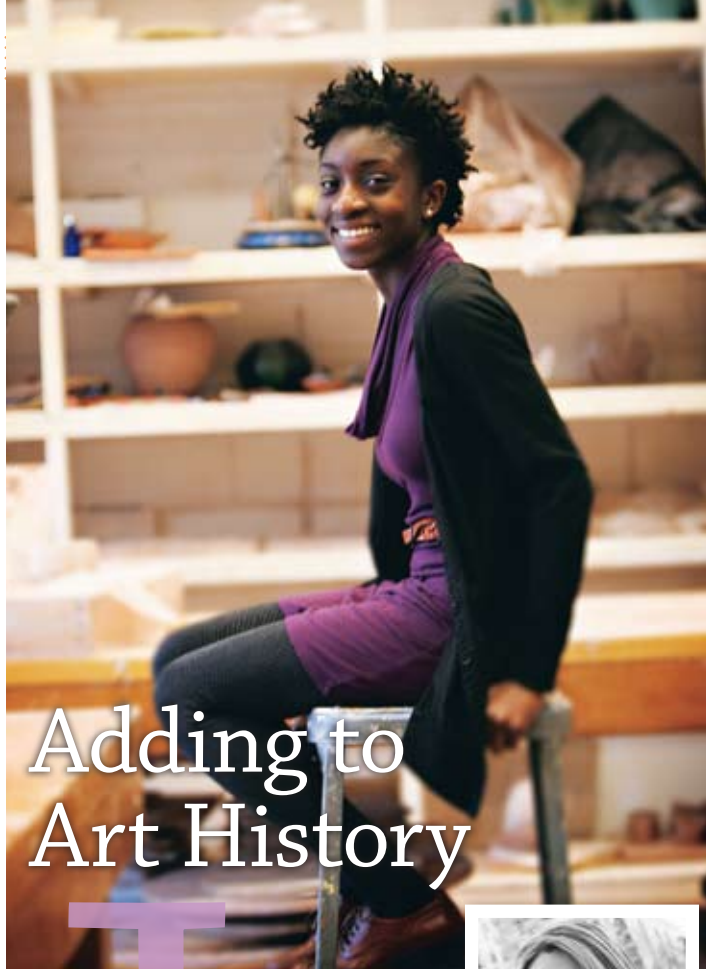
Glieber is eager to give Macalester's volleyball program her full attention, placing an emphasis on team chemistry. As a coach, "You have to know who the players are, what works best for the individual and the team," she says. Captains play a critical role in Glieber's coaching, particularly in setting and monitoring team goals. "Communication is really important" in keeping the team prepared and engaged, she says. "I want my players to feel comfortable talking to me about anything."

—ANDREW McILREE



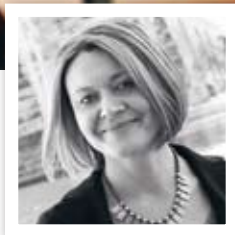
The Macalester women's basketball team made its first appearance in the MIAC women's basketball playoffs this winter, as the Number four seed in the six-team field. They are shown here in a huddle at the quarter-final round game, which they lost 60-52 to the University of St. Thomas.

PHOTOS: (FAR LEFT) GREG HELGESON (4), (ABOVE) COURTESY OF ANNIE GLIEBER, (BOTTOM RIGHT) CHRIS MITCHELL



Adding to Art History

Junior **Bimbola Akinbola** (Columbia, Mo.) believes in following her passions. To her surprise, doing so resulted in collaborating with a professor on a new art history textbook for undergraduates.



A dual major in American studies and studio art, Akinbola (top photo) eagerly signed up for art professor **Joanna Inglot's** course "Race, Class, Gender, and Ethnicity in American Art." "I enjoy bringing an artistic eye and the knowledge I've gained in my painting and drawing classes into my American studies courses, and vice versa," says Akinbola.

When Inglot rued the fact that there was no textbook for the course, Akinbola was moved to action. She shared with Inglot her desire to address the lack of scholarship bridging the two disciplines, and Inglot proposed that they collaborate on an anthology for similar art history courses.

As the project grew, Akinbola received a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship to support her work. The MMUF aims to increase the number of minority students who pursue PhDs in the arts and sciences.

As collaborative partners, Akinbola and Inglot meet to discuss a section of the anthology before Akinbola begins to research it. After studying both the art and the historical context of relevant works, Akinbola writes an annotated bibliography and a short paper summarizing her findings. The two then discuss these findings and how they fit into the book.

"I've really enjoyed revisiting historical moments I've studied in past American studies classes and looking at them in the context of art history," says Akinbola. The research has also inspired her studio work. The magnitude of the project is good preparation for the future doctoral student—the two worked on the project last summer and throughout this academic year, and they will continue next summer.

"It's amazing to have the opportunity to create a text that will actually have a place in college classrooms," says Akinbola.

Bikes, Coffee, and a Global Connection

STUDENTS WHO NEED QUICK, cheap transportation now go—to the library? At Mac they do. Thanks to a cooperative effort between **MacBike** (a student-run organization that promotes bicycle use) and the DeWitt Wallace Library, students can check out a bike much as they would a book. The program, BikeShare, provides free three-day bike rentals; there's even a Burley trailer available for those hauling groceries or gear.

MacBike services the eight bikes and the library handles the administration. Any student, faculty member, or staff member can simply check out from the library a key that unlocks a specific bike in a rack near the Campus Center. If borrowers fail to promptly return Thor, Freyja, or Prince (all the bikes have names) they'll receive an overdue notice, just as if they had borrowed a book.

Besides bikes, there's now java amidst the stacks—another new and much appreciated addition to the library is its coffee machine. Reputed to be the model used on Air Force One, the coffee-maker and resulting brew get rave reviews from students.

Of course, the heart of the library remains information. To that end, Mac's library took another leap forward last year by joining **WorldCat**, the world's largest network of library content and services. WorldCat links 72,000 libraries in 86 countries with holdings of 1.5 billion items. "We're leveraging the power the libraries have to share resources," says Dave Collins '85, associate director. "Now the world is our collection."



PHOTOS: (ABOVE) KELLY MACWILLIAMS, (MIDDLE) COURTESY OF JOANNA INGLOT, (BOTTOM RIGHT) AARON BROWN



WEB CONNECT: mmuf.org

Summit to St. Clair

CAMPUS NEWS SUMMARY



PHOTO: KELLY MACWILLIAMS

Six faculty members received tenure in 2010 and were honored at a February reception. Shown here enjoying the warm winter day of the reception are (left to right) Erik Larson, sociology; Chad Topaz, mathematics, statistics, and computer science; Kelly MacGregor, geology; Paul Dosh, Latin American studies; Holly Barcus, geography; and Harry Waters Jr., theatre and dance.

STUDY ABROAD

EVERYONE WANTS APRIL IN PARIS. It's an understandable impulse, but it causes problems at many colleges, including Macalester. Last year only about 70 students traveled abroad in the fall, while 156 went in the spring. The imbalance between study away enrollments is problematic for a variety of reasons, says Provost Kathleen Murray, including creating a diminished sense of community on campus in the spring.

Maintaining the balance is also expensive. It means needing to hire part-time faculty for fall courses and juggling excess capacity in the residence halls and course sections in the spring, which leads to lost

revenue. Indeed the study away budget jumped to \$3.4 million in the 2009-10 school year from \$1.9 million a decade ago.

In an effort to allow more students to have study away opportunities while slowing the rate of budget increase, administrators are determined to even the fall-spring distribution. Next year, according to Murray, there will be 250 study away slots, distributed equally between the semesters. (The 250 cap is a 6 percent increase over last year's cap.) This means that if students continue to prefer studying abroad in the spring, those applying for fall spots are unlikely to be impacted by the cap.

Before You Graduate:

Below is a list of don't-miss things to do, compiled by current Mac students for entering first-years. To see the entire list "100 Things to Do Before You Graduate," go to macalester.edu/admissions.

1. Listen to a world-class speaker
2. Embrace the plaid at a Trads concert
3. Take a stroll down by the Mississippi River
4. Sip some bubble tea at the Tea Garden
5. See a play at the Guthrie Theater
6. Go to a Minnesota Twins game
7. Cheer on the Scots
8. Picnic at the Walker Sculpture Garden
9. Paint the Rock
10. Tune your radio to WMCN
11. Spoon up a bowl of MacSoup
12. Join Model UN or Mock Trial
13. Have your professor serve you at Midnight Breakfast
14. Rent a paddleboat and pedal around Lake Calhoun
15. See a concert at First Avenue



5



8



15

New Women's Soccer Coach

Kate Ryan Reiling '00, coach and businesswoman, has a clear philosophy: "I want to spend my time being the person who's dreaming and creating and collaborating."

This spring Ryan Reiling replaced her own former coach, John Leaney, as head of the women's soccer program. "It feels like home," Ryan Reiling says. A three-time All-America midfielder, Ryan Reiling led Macalester to the NCAA Division III championship as a junior, and in her senior year was selected MIAC Player of the Year as the Scots finished runner-up in the NCAA playoffs. She was a two-time team captain and was selected as the Final Four Offensive Player of the Tournament in '98. "Winning the national championship during my junior year was one of the greatest moments of my life," she says.

The lessons she learned at Macalester, both on and off the field, remain inspirational for Ryan Reiling. "As team captain both junior and senior year, one of the experiences was how to lead not because you are older, but because your teammates recognize leadership strength in you," she says, remarking that this model of collaborative leadership is unique to the institution.

Ryan Reiling has been involved in soccer in several positions since graduating from Macalester. She was director of coaching and player development at CC United Club in Chaska, assistant coach at St. Catherine University, and assistant to Leaney at Mac from 2004 to 2007. She has worked with other programs, including the Minnesota Olympic Development Program and St. Paul Academy.

With an MBA from Dartmouth College's Tuck School of Business, Ryan Reiling is transferring her leadership skills to her new job at Macalester. "I'm a huge believer in having clear and high expectations for my players and myself," she says. "I see coaching as giving student athletes the tools to solve problems." —ANDREW MCILREE



Affordable Housing

WE'VE ALL READ ABOUT enraged suburban residents fighting off affordable housing in their communities. But in the Minneapolis suburbs, at least, that image turns out to be untrue.

That's what geography major **Patrick Malloy '10** (Atlanta) found out while researching his honors thesis, "The Political Economy of Affordable Housing Development in Suburban Hennepin County, Minnesota." Malloy looked at the distribution of affordable housing development in eight Hennepin County suburbs and found that in only two of those cities—Edina and Minnetrista—had residents blocked development. Although third-ring suburb Maple Grove was notorious for being anti-affordable housing back in the '90s, "that has changed and people there are relatively supportive of it now," says Malloy. In fact, that city added more affordable units than any other in the group from 2000 to 2007.

Malloy also found:

- Affordable housing thrives where it can help a city's fiscal standing.
- The strongest advocates for affordable housing are faith-based organizations.
- Often it took just one or two passionate city council advocates to persuade other council members to make affordable housing a priority for that city.
- Affordable housing is most readily accepted when it's planned on carefully chosen sites and blends well into the surrounding neighborhood.

Malloy, who hopes to earn a graduate degree in public policy or urban planning, won second place for his thesis in the undergraduate division of the Association of American Geographers' West Lake Division. His thesis adviser was geography professor Dan Trudeau; his research was funded by a Mellon Curricular Pathways Grant.



Species Defender

Biology professor **Mark Davis** asks: Are nonnative species always bad?

BY | GREG BREINING

WHEN MACALESTER BIOLOGY PROFESSOR Mark Davis expounds publicly on exotic species—creatures from dandelions to carp that come from somewhere else—he eventually mentions LLT, his shorthand for Learn to Love Them. Exotic species are here to stay, he says. No way to get rid of them. No way to prevent more from showing up in our forests, lakes, and farmland. So get used to it. And relax. With important exceptions, most aren't as bad as people think.

"When I first say that, people in the audience almost get physically sick," says Davis. "It's amazing how extensive the indoctrination has been—nonnative species are bad. We've got to get rid of them. Boy, if you want nature to stop, you're going to be miserable."

There's a reason he's meeting resistance. Davis, the DeWitt Wallace Professor of Biology and department chair, is challenging recent trends in the field of "invasion biology." Once a study of the way species colonize new environments, the discipline has adopted an orthodoxy that states that exotics—also called nonnatives or aliens—are dangerously invasive and stand ready to "degrade" native ecosystems.

Davis and a small cohort of iconoclasts propound a different view: Exotic species are part of nature's rough and tumble, and there's little point in ripping out buckthorn or throwing Asian carp on the bank to die. In his new book, *Invasion Biology* (Oxford University Press, 2009) Davis explores various theories on the function of exotic species in ecosystems and argues for a more objective view of a phenomenon that will only accelerate with increased global trade and travel.

Among Davis's more unorthodox or controversial assertions:

Exotic species act a lot like natives. In fact, says Davis, a scientist who didn't know the history of individual organisms would have difficulty in distinguishing natives from nonnatives on the basis of how they interact with surrounding species. Ragtag assemblages of exotics and natives quickly adapt and perform about as well.

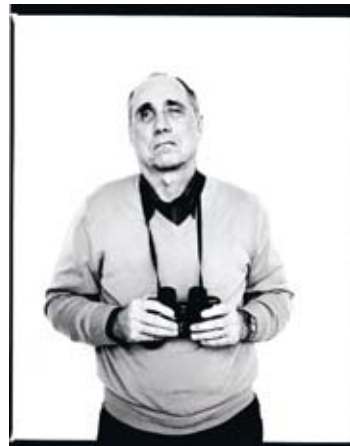
Except in insular environments, such as islands and lakes, exotic species rarely drive natives to extinction. Throughout the United States, local ecosystems have perhaps 20 percent more plant species than they once did because of the addition of foreign species. "How many species of plants in the U.S. have gone extinct because of the thousands of nonnative plants that have been introduced?" asks Davis. "Zero!"

The existence of nonnative organisms is not a sign of a degraded or unhealthy ecosystem. "There isn't such a thing as a healthy ecosystem or a sick ecosystem," Davis says. It would be difficult to know how to define such a thing. "When someone is referring to a healthy ecosystem, what they are referring to is an ecosystem the way they want it to be. It's really kind of a way to manipulate the audience, because who can be opposed to ecosystem health?"

The world will increasingly be made up of "novel ecosystems," a stew of old and new. Davis wouldn't invest much effort or money in fighting species such as buckthorn or purple loosestrife that are al-

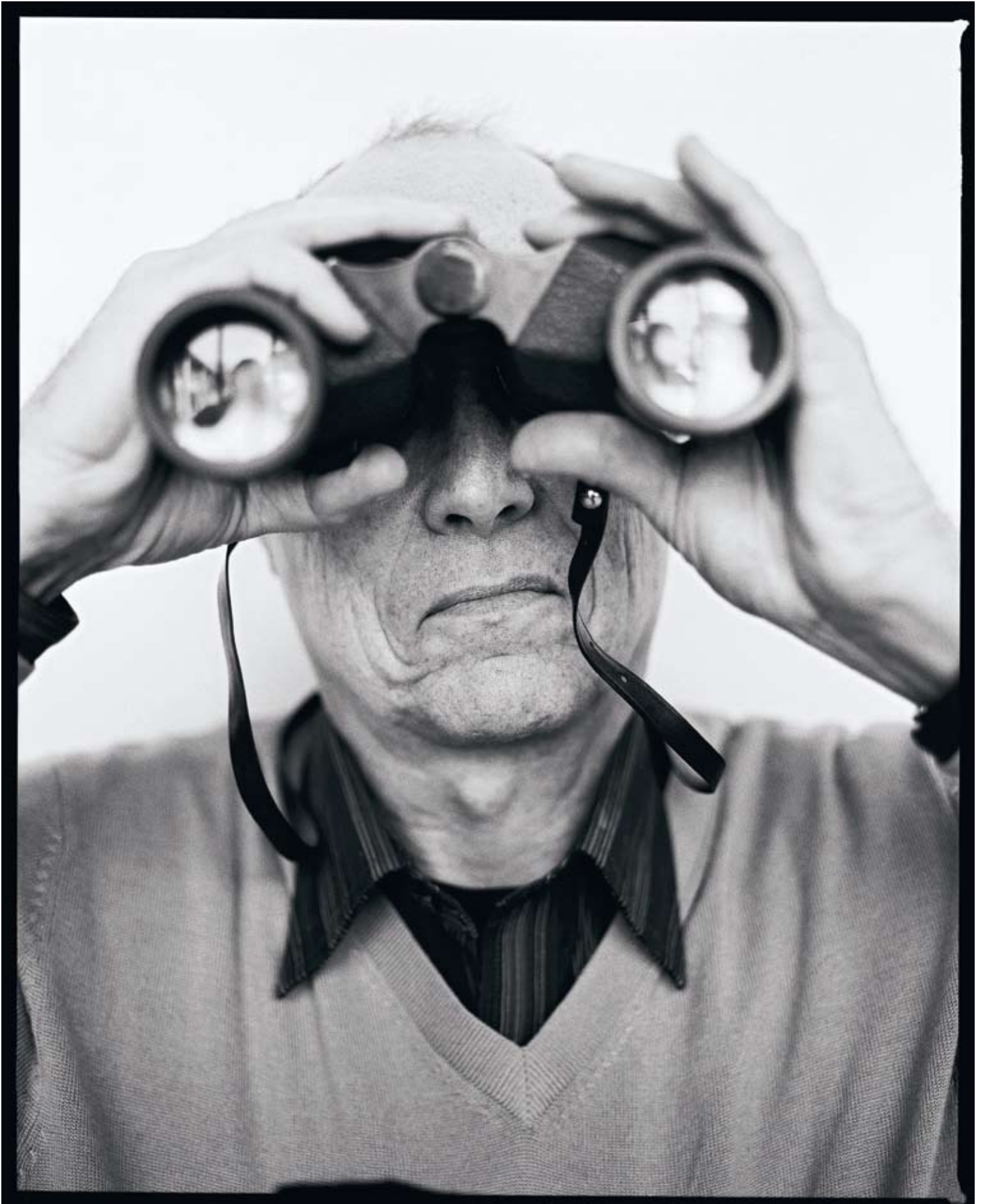
ready established and are not doing much damage. He suggests instead employing triage: vigorously trying to stop threats to human health (such as avian flu) and the economy (gypsy moths and emerald ash borers) and not worrying about the rest. "For certain targeted species we can make a difference and it definitely is worth the effort. You have to focus."

Invasion biology has cut itself off from other ecological sciences by investing in



battling exotic species rather than examining the function of non-natives in ecosystems. Even language among scientists, such as the term *invasion* itself, reveals biases that make for poor science. "All I've been arguing for is a more nuanced characterization of what's been happening," says Davis. And he's finding traction for his ideas: "People are thinking more carefully about the words they are using, the assumptions they might be bringing in."

Not everyone. Dan Simberloff—professor of ecology at the University of Tennessee, director of the Institute for Biological Invasions, and one of the most prominent voices in the field—counters that invasions of exotic species *do* threaten natives. Chestnut blight, caused by an introduced fungus, swept across the eastern United States a century ago, almost exterminating the native chestnut. Moreover, Simberloff says, "We know it caused global extinction of at least sev-



PHOTOS BY | **DARIN BACK**

en species of moths that were host-specific only on American chestnuts." Nonetheless, he calls *Invasion Biology* "a really good book." He adds, however, "It has a number of peculiar aspects to it. They almost all revolve around Davis's odd views that invasions aren't really so problematic and there's something xenophobic about people who worry about them."

But Davis isn't alone in his beliefs. One of the more famous champions of this view was the late evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould, who argued that the movement of species around the globe should be viewed as part of the evolutionary process, not necessarily a destructive force. The discussion about native plants, Gould wrote, "encompasses a remarkable mixture of sound biology, invalid ideas, false extensions, ethical implications, and political usages."



DAVIS'S UNORTHODOX TAKE on biology may follow from his unorthodox path to the discipline. "What I find so interesting," he says, "is that so many of these issues are seen immediately by people outside the field." People like Davis himself, who earned a bachelor's degree at Harvard, writing a thesis on Spanish baroque medicine. "I have a checkered background," he notes. Literally: he drove a Checker cab with dreams of writing the great American novel. He even flew hot-air balloons for a while.

odds with the prevailing orthodoxy that a tight-knit ecosystem of natives would hold nonnatives at bay. The student said the paradox reminded her of Davis's work at Cedar Creek.

"It was that student who actually made the connection," says Davis. He found himself wrestling the problem as he returned from a conference. "Between the time we started the descent and we touched down—10 minutes—I had written out the fluctuating resource hypothesis for invasiveness." That hypothesis states that if the availability of resources such as nutrients or sunlight fluctuates, an area will be colonized by new species—both native and nonnative.

"I thought it was a good idea. But I was left with this challenge. I wasn't really very well known at that point." He found two enthusiastic co-authors at England's University of Sheffield, senior researcher Ken Thompson and professor emeritus Phil Grime. Grime in particular was well known in the world of plant ecology. Both added important points to bolster Davis's arguments. The paper was published in the *Journal of Ecology* in 2000. "It's so commonsense it really couldn't be wrong," Davis says. Even though it challenges the idea that a diverse assemblage of native species is the best defense against invasion, researchers have been quick to cite the paper in their own work because it explains in direct mechanistic fashion how invasions occur. "There's been enormous support for it."

With that paper, Davis had leaped into the cage match of invasion biology. He challenged the definition of *invasion* itself ("a very

Established researchers treated Davis as though he were an exotic species himself. "They were trying not only to keep new species out. They were trying to keep new ideas out," says Davis.

After returning to Harvard for a master's in education, Davis worked part time in the university's primate labs, rekindling an interest in wildlife that may have begun on family bird-watching outings. "I really wanted to study animals in their natural habitat," Davis recalls. So the summer after receiving his master's, he signed up for a tern research and management program on Cape Cod. He couldn't believe that this—a summer on the beach with birds—was really a job.

Back in Boston driving cab, Davis waited for a sign about what to do with his life. "I was driving into the Callahan Tunnel on the way to the airport. I went in not knowing what I was going to do and came out having decided to apply to graduate school to work with birds."

Applying to Dartmouth despite his lack of an extensive biology background, he sold himself as a renaissance man. It worked. He graduated with his PhD, having studied first shorebirds, then insects, and later plants.

When he came to Macalester as an assistant professor of biology in 1981, Davis began studying plant ecology, often at Cedar Creek, the University of Minnesota field station. He churned out papers on the ecology of prairie, woodlands, and savannas, on subjects ranging from wildfire to gophers. Over time, he wondered why old fields were so resistant to colonization by native oaks. What are the characteristics that make an area either vulnerable or resistant to invasions?

"This has been a Macalester story!" Davis exclaims, by which he means it began with the questions of an inquisitive seminar student. She had written a report on a study that noted that the places with the most native species are also richest in exotic species—a fact at

unfortunate choice of words") and received spirited rebuttals that, he felt, veered toward ad hominem attacks on his inexperience in the field. Established researchers treated Davis as though he were an exotic species himself. "They were trying not only to keep new species out. They were trying to keep new ideas out."

Rather than back down, Davis wrote several rebuttals, including another paper with Thompson and Grime that warned that so-called invasion biologists were limiting their own scientific development and isolating themselves from the rest of ecology by making artificial, unsubstantiated, and value-laden distinctions between native and nonnative species. Another response in the *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America* seemed to mock his adversaries with the title "Newcomers Invade the Field of Invasion Ecology: Question the Field's Future."

"They just picked the wrong guy. I've been called a contrarian. Which is always hard to respond to. Because if you say, No, I'm not!" Davis pauses and smiles. "Then I guess it's true."



MANY OF DAVIS'S OUTSIDE INTERESTS revolve around the natural world. He continues his childhood pastime of bird-watching. "In fact, that is how my wife and I met. I actually proposed on Hawk Ridge in Duluth!" He often goes camping and canoeing.

He sees his broad background, with a healthy dose of liberal arts, as a "perfect match for Mac, where the students in my biology class-

es have broad liberal arts interests and enjoy the multidisciplinary approach I bring to classes. If I had to pick one thing that has brought the most enjoyment in my teaching over the years, it would be turning on students to birds and plants. I often begin my field botany and animal behavior and ecology classes with the warning: Be careful about taking this class, because it will change your life!”

“He really knows what he’s talking about,” says Courtney Jones ’10, a biology major and teaching assistant for an evolution class. “Years of experience have given him a wealth of knowledge that I can only hope to reach someday. He is also extremely driven to learn and teach. He seems to pick up on the talents of students and hold them to very high standards,” she says.

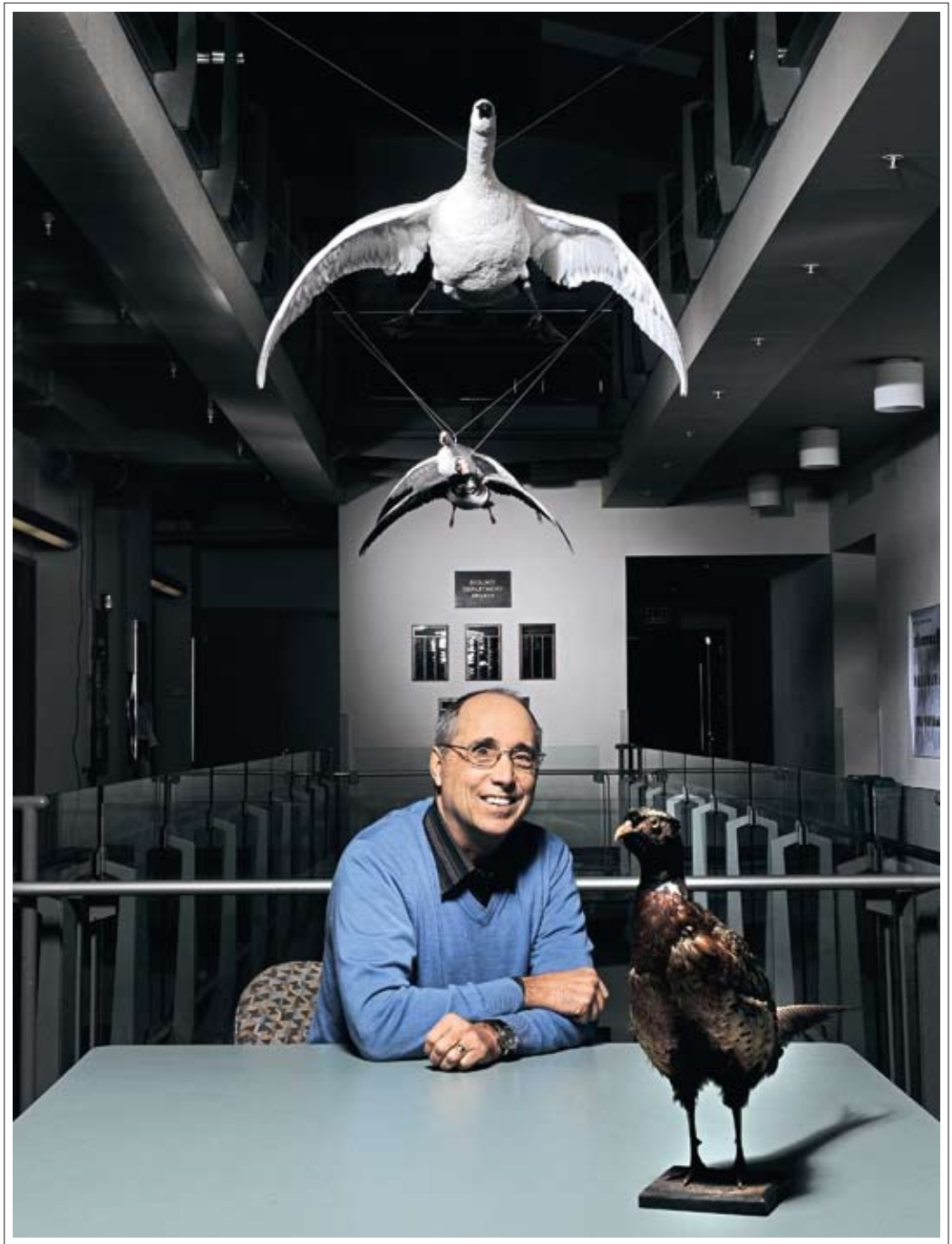
With the publication of *Invasion Biology*, Davis plans to keep on studying nonnative species. He will continue to work on the prairies and woodlands of Cedar Creek, investigating why some plant communities seem more subject to invasion than others, how resources affect plant competition, and how environmental factors such as rainfall and carbon dioxide affect forest and grassland succession.

He also would like to reinvigorate a Macalester field site, the Katharine Ordway Natural History Study Area, along the Mississippi in Inver Grove Heights, and use it with students to continue similar research into species invasions and competition.

The exotic species flap has also stirred his interest in broader issues of ideological beliefs within the scientific community. He argues that values and age-old religious attitudes toward nature frame scientific study and debates more than most scientists would acknowledge. “There’s clearly an emotional side, but most scientists don’t want to admit it,” says Davis. Ecologists, for example, particularly value “native” ecosystems not only for the long-term interspecies relationships that exist, but also out of a sense of original order, that “species have their place,” a notion that begins to sound downright religious, as if we were trying to preserve an Eden-like world.

“That’s a lot of what I’ve been challenging,” says Davis. “People can get addicted to paradigms. Then paradigms become an ideology. Belief and conviction are very difficult adversaries since they are little affected by data and evidence.” **M**

GREG BREINING writes about travel, science, and nature for Audubon, Natural Geographic Traveler, and other publications.



Biology professor Mark Davis is shown here in Olin-Rice with three native birds and one non-native (introduced from China and causing no problems, he reports). From front to back they are: ring-necked pheasant (the Chinese transplant), trumpeter swan, blue phase snow goose, and white phase snow goose.



Alternative Medico

Sam Willis '96 is giving Twin Citians a simpler, cheaper option for health care.



BY | AMY GOETZMAN '93

Turn down the street that looks like an alley, but isn't. Park in front of the now-defunct microbrewery, with old hops still vining up its wall. The clinic is next door. Just inside the door, stop to admire its soaring ceilings and bone white walls, boldly decked with an abstract art installation. There's a small desk; behind it, a man wearing a gray pullover. The doctor is in.

Are you sure?

Sam Willis '96 doesn't exactly look the part. He's soft-spoken, unassuming, and minus the doctor's coat. No tie, even. "Ties have actually been found to be highly unhygienic," he says, although that's not really the reason he dresses down for work. "I made a conscious decision not to have that symbolic barrier between me and the patient."

Everything about Willis's practice is different, by design. The institutional lobby-with-framed-prints has been replaced by a gallery full of original art. An office manager helps run the practice, but the doctor himself answers the phone and greets patients. There is no buffer zone, no paternalistic model of care, and no health insurance. That means the patients are different, too.

"There are thousands of people who are left out of the system. They might be self-employed, or their employer doesn't offer insurance, or they have a high-deductible plan that discourages them from seeking routine care," Willis says. "This gives them an option."

Doctor Sam, as he is known, opened his Minneapolis practice last August. He offers that elusive thing politicians keep fighting about—high-quality, affordable care. For about the same price, you could go to a mini-clinic in a grocery store and see a random nurse. In contrast, Willis provides a physician's expertise and extended professional network, as well as an ongoing relationship. "It's not right for every patient," Willis concedes. "There are certainly people who don't like it, who prefer a traditional institutional care model."

The clinic has private exam rooms, although Willis typically sits down with his patients in a small lounge. "People are comfortable out here and understand right away that this is a nonjudgmental space. For instance, my patients who are transgender may have had bad experiences in the past. Here they feel safe. I also routinely work with people who have experiences with substance abuse. My manner of interviewing tells them it's OK to open up. I've trained myself to pause and wait, then listen. Everything about my clinic supports that, I hope, from my demeanor to the art," he says, gesturing to a black and white photo of a man in a cowboy hat, sitting in a wheelchair. He bartered with the artist for the piece: One photo in exchange for six clinic visits.

"Medicine is really about life," he says. "And the arts are a really wonderful way to access that story and that understanding about who we are and what's going on with us."


Art has long been important to Willis, who came to his Macalester admissions interview with a self-portrait and a mobile sculpture. Science was already beckoning him, but he wanted to make sure his art wouldn't get left behind. "It was clear to me that Mac would be a place where I could nurture my love of the arts even while I pursued a degree in the sciences," says Willis, who grew up in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

At Mac, Willis explored fine art and played violin and sax, but focused on biology and ecology. He didn't consider medicine. In fact, he rejected it. "I had a summer opportunity to shadow a doctor and almost fainted when someone was having a thumb laceration sewn up. I thought, OK, there goes medicine." But Willis continued to study biology, and while doing a stint with the nonprofit Glacier Institute in Montana he trained as a wilderness first responder. "I loved the science and physiology, and the mock emergencies were really interesting and connected science and people and wilderness and ecology. I thought, maybe I *can* go into medicine. At the end of the summer I applied to medical school."

Willis attended Penn State, studying cost-of-care issues and primary care. After residencies in Philadelphia, he pondered where to settle for a first job. A GLBT reunion at Mac offered him a way to revisit Minnesota. "What a wonderful reunion that was!" he remembers. "There were people from the '50s and '60s; it was really cool to learn what people's experiences were like as gay individuals through different decades."

And at that reunion Willis met Jeremy Hanson '95. They fell in love, and Willis decided to stay in town. Clearly, it was an inspired move; the couple married last fall. Hanson is chief of staff for Minneapolis mayor R.T. Rybak. "He's very politically oriented. We have some lively discussions about health care," says Willis.

Hanson supported Willis's dream to open a small practice, despite the fact that only a handful of other Minnesota doctors have done so. Willis stabilizes his income by working one day a week with Michael Oldenburg, another doctor with an independent clinic in Minneapolis. But after just six months, his own clinic is thriving. And after hours he sometimes heads to a studio space he shares in the building; he still makes time for his art.

"I love my job. I'm not making tons of money, but it's a sustainable model," he says. "This is something that works for a lot of people outside the traditional system. And this is something that works for me." 

AMY GOETZMAN '93 is a Minneapolis writer.



Above: The entrance to Willis's medical office. **Below:** His logo marks patient parking spots.



THE BOTTOM LINE

MEMBERSHIP COST: \$45/month

VISIT COST: \$36/member
\$50-\$125/nonmember

SEASONAL FLU SHOT:
\$23/member \$38/nonmember

STREP TEST:
free/member \$17/nonmember

Traveling Light



Mac grads are at the forefront of the sustainable tourism movement.



BY | ELIZABETH FOY LARSEN

After 18 months and a sailing route that extended from New York to Rome by way of Central America and North Africa, **Paul Bennett '92** and **Lani Bevacqua '92** realized they had learned a thing or two about meaningful travel. “What turns a good trip into a great trip is stumbling upon someone who really knows the place you are visiting—someone who knows the people, the institutions, and how to get things done,” says Bennett. Their insight about the importance of slowing down and creating relationships was the seed for Context, the walking tour company the couple founded in 2003 that pairs curious travelers with scholarly guides for excursions on anything from scientific thought in Renaissance-era Florence to New York City’s artisan chocolate scene.

Bennett and Bevacqua are among a number of Macalester graduates who are actively involved in what’s known as sustainable tourism. This rapidly growing branch of the travel industry is committed to providing travelers with a more thoughtful and authentic experience than is offered by a typical package vacation. But that’s only half of the equation. Sustainable tourism is also dedicated to making a low impact on the environment and local cultures while simultaneously providing economic opportunities for locals and enhancing cultural heritage. “Sustainable tourism is an all-encompassing umbrella that includes cultural tourism, ecotourism, and nature tourism,” says **Jorge De Vicente '92**, a sustainable tourism consultant with the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C.

Top left: A view of Paris, as seen from the top of the Pompidou Centre. **Above:** The Maya-Koba Resort on the Mexican Riviera (shown here) provides a good example of sustainable development, according to Jorge De Vicente '92, a sustainable tourism consultant with the Inter-American Development Bank. **Below:** The Hagia Sophia, now a museum, was for 500 years the principal mosque in Istanbul.





PHOTO: PETULIA MELIODE

Clockwise from upper left: Context founders Lani Bevacqua '92 (left) and Paul Bennett '92 (center) taking part in a Museum of Modern Art tour with art historian Ara Merjian; The London Eye, one of the world's tallest ferris wheels, is part of the "Tides of Time: A Riverside Stroll" walking tour; Art historian Karen Lloyd leading the "Arte Vaticana," an in-depth tour of the Vatican art collection.





PHOTO: NAN McELROY

PHOTO: COURTESY OF GARY ARNDT '91

Clockwise from upper left: Context cofounder Paul Bennett '92 in Venice, touring the lagoon with Venetian Italo Ongaro; In mid-March, intrepid world traveler Gary Arndt '91 was in Bangkok photographing the Redshirt protests. Approximately 100,000 Thais marched on the prime minister's office, seeking to drive the ruling party from power; Marine scientist Luca Zaggia explaining a point on the "Science and the Secrets of the Lagoon" tour in Venice.

That's a tall order, given that an airplane ride alone can significantly expand even a modest vacation's carbon footprint. "Something manmade is always going to alter a natural destination," says De Vicente. "Whenever you build something you have to destroy something." What's needed, in his view, is an approach to tourism that gets governments and the private sector on the same page.

That spirit of collaboration must also extend to the relationship between tourists and local communities. Fostering that connection is at the core of Context's mission. Context's Foundation for Sustainable Travel was created in 2007 to support cultural preservation projects in Florence, Rome, London, New York, and Paris. A portion of Context's proceeds is also earmarked toward a carbon-offset program. Each of the company's docents—Context's term for their highly educated tour guides—takes a workshop on sustainability in which they learn everything from which locally owned businesses to promote to how to introduce into their tours discussions about the impact of crowds on monuments.

Context also actively supports cultural traditions. In Florence, the company awards an annual scholarship that funds an apprentice to work with a local artisan. "It used to be that an artisan fed and housed an apprentice for 15 years until the apprentice took over the business," says Bennett, who notes that many of these traditions date back to the Medieval era. "But those same artisans can't afford apprentices today."

Context's Florence customers fund the apprentice scholarship: Each one is charged an extra five Euros per walk. In addition to learning about the city's many artisan traditions, the travelers also meet the apprentice whom they are helping to support. "A customer who does a Florence walk finishes the experience saying "There's something at risk and I'm now a defender of that patrimony," says Bennett.

Bennett and Bevacqua's good works have not gone unnoticed. This year, the company's foundation was recognized by National Geographic's Geotourism Challenge as an outstanding leader in sustainable travel—the only urban-based travel company to receive the honor.



Art historian Charlotte Daudon leading a group through the Carnavalet Museum during the “Revolutionary Paris” walking tour.

While Context operates within the already established parameters of some of the world’s most beloved cities, De Vicente’s work focuses on creating sustainable travel destinations from scratch. In his work for the Inter-American Development Bank, he provides comprehensive national and regional analysis for Mexico, Central America, and the Dominican Republic. His bank finances studies to help countries develop tourism master plans that include putting together infrastructure, plans for attractions, and criteria for protecting the environment and culturally sensitive sites, he says.

The stretch of Mexican Caribbean coastline known as the Riviera Maya has some excellent examples of sustainable development, says De Vicente. These include the Mayakoba and Hacienda Tres Rios resorts, where dying mangrove swamps have been rehabilitated and become refuges for local wildlife. On the other hand, the Punta Cana area in the Dominican Republic is notorious for slapping up enormous resorts with little regard for the stresses they inflict on the area’s aquifers. “Some push the water into an internal lagoon a half a mile from the sea but interconnected,” he says. “When it rains there’s a lot of runoff and then the beach is polluted with bacteria.”

Still, determining what’s sustainable and what’s not can be complicated, says De Vicente, who recently led the creation of a scorecard

that Inter-American Development Bank now uses to evaluate a project’s sustainability. Governments of developing countries are often attracted to resorts and other tourism opportunities because they’re a quick way to provide employment. “But they take a short-term approach to planning,” he says. “You can create employment, sure. But what happens if the basic resource your economy depends on is harmed and you endanger the stability of that resource?”

So how does someone with De Vicente’s understanding of the issues choose a vacation? “I really research the hotel,” he says, citing studies that show hotel rooms provide more local employment than condominiums. “I’m not looking for perfection, but I do want the hotel to practice what it preaches. I want to make sure there’s no green-washing.” De Vicente recommends the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria website as a good resource for travelers interested in avoiding harm to the places they visit. “You can learn what it means to be sustainable and become a more informed customer,” he says. “You can ask the right questions before you book.”

And when you arrive, you can engage more thoughtfully with the local people and businesses. “Many all-inclusive resorts make the nearby communities feel excluded,” says De Vicente. “They should make as much of an effort as possible to work with local communities so that they can provide the tourists with excursions, products, and other services that will establish a connection between the two.”

That kind of purposeful interaction drives the journeys of **Gary Arndt ’91**. Arndt owned a successful Internet consulting company until 1998. After selling his business, he studied geology at the University of Minnesota, an experience that fueled his desire to see the world. He sold his Twin Cities home in 2007 and has been on the road ever since.

Arndt records his travels on his blog (everything-everywhere.com), which has turned into a runaway success with 175,000 readers a month. His philosophy is to travel light (his carefully edited packing list includes only three T-shirts and two button-down shirts) and to take his time. “I never like to be in a major city for less than a week and will often stay longer,” he says. “I never travel with package tour groups and never use guidebooks. While I do visit many tourist attractions, especially historical and natural ones, I am usually on my own or with someone I’ve met on the road.”

Meeting people from other cultures has profoundly changed how Arndt views his country’s relationship to the world. “I find it hard to watch American news anymore,” he says. “If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that things are always more complex than they seem. We like to distill things down to good and bad, right and wrong. Reality is always much more complicated. Every country has petty internal squabbles with ethnic, religious, or political factions vying for power. Things that seem morally cut and dried become more ambiguous the more you learn about them.”

ACCESSIBLE TOURING



WHAT ABOUT TOURS FOR PEOPLE with physical limitations? That’s the question **Marilyn Koch Straka ’68** asked herself when knee surgery put her in a wheelchair for a few months. A resident of San Francisco’s hilly Pacific Heights neighborhood, she was dismayed to realize that there were only two blocks in her immediate area that she could navigate.

Straka’s solution was to create *On the Level Tours*, a series of guidebooks and guided walks that take in the beauty and dynamic charm of her adopted city without the arduous up and down treks it’s famous for. Judging by the reactions of her satisfied customers, her services are meeting an important need. “Many general guides and even the U.S. Park Service aren’t aware of what the definition of accessibility is,” she says. “They’ll say it’s level when in fact it’s not at all.”

ELIZABETH FOY LARSEN

writes for *Mother Jones*, *Child*, and other national magazines. She lives in Minneapolis.



WEB CONNECT:
contexttravel.com

onthelevelsf.com
sustainabletourismcriteria.org/
everything-everywhere.com

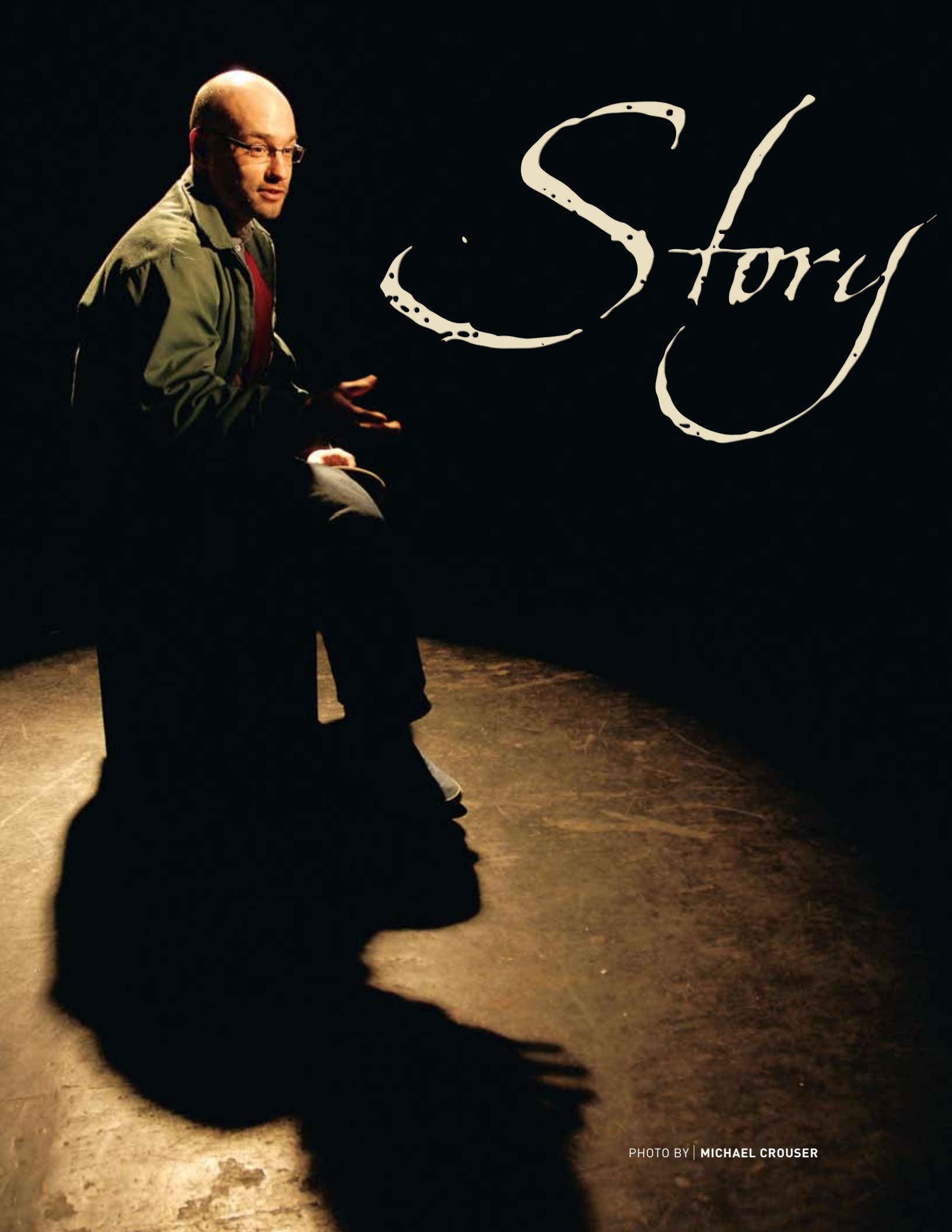


PHOTO BY | MICHAEL CROUSER

Time

As story-telling grows in popularity,
Seth Lind '01 is at the heart of it.

BY | HANNAH CLARK '02

It's a cold January night in New York City—the perfect sort of night to stay home and watch television, perhaps huddled under a blanket. Instead, at least 60 people have braved the weather to come to Under St. Mark's Theater, a cozy venue in the East Village. Those who came early are lucky enough to find seats. Others are standing in the aisle, until Seth Lind '01 walks backstage and rustles up a dozen folding chairs.

The crowd is here for *Told*, a live storytelling event that Lind hosts every month. The show features several performers who tell 10- to 15-minute stories united by a theme. Since *Told* was launched in October 2008, Lind has built up a following, and now he frequently has to haul out those extra chairs. The show's popularity is part of a larger trend, one that runs contrary to the prevailing wisdom that, to be successful, entertainment must be delivered via screen. Although computer use is rising to levels that experts once thought impossible, live storytelling events are having something of a heyday.

The best-known storytelling organization is probably the Moth, which hosts competitive story slams around the country. In 2009, the Moth hosted 85 shows, up from 26 in 2006. Then, of course, there is the granddaddy of modern storytelling: *This American Life*, the public radio show that also happens to be where Lind has his day job.

"*This American Life* showed that there is this audience of people out there who believe that small stories can actually be big," Lind says. "While it's important to hear about things like school shootings, it could also be important to hear about, say, what's on a note being passed in a trigonometry class in some random school. Storytelling is popular because it makes people feel not so crazy and alone."

Each episode of *This American Life* features true stories centering around a theme, united with narration from host Ira Glass. Since the show began broadcasting in Chicago in 1995, it has grown into one of the most popular public radio shows in the United States, broadcasting from 500 stations around the country. As production manager, Lind oversees the business side of the show, and develops ideas for making it more financially sustainable. "I never thought I would have any job that related to money because it just wasn't something I cared about it," Lind says. "I don't balance my checkbook—I'd rather have the bank steal money from me than have to think about keeping track."

Luckily for *This American Life*, Lind turns out to have strong business acumen. He pushed the show to implement text-message giving, which has doubled its number of donors. He also encouraged Glass to produce a cinematic event, in which a live episode was broadcast to 60,000 people in 430 movie theaters nationwide. "We never would have done that without Seth," Glass says, adding that other shows like *Prairie Home Companion* have since pursued cinematic events of their own. Says Glass: "Garrison Keillor walks in Seth Lind's shadow."

At Macalester, Lind did not see himself as a businessman or a performer. During his first year he performed in a production of *Richard III*, put on by the Mac Players. "Luckily the character I played—George, Duke of Clarence—is perpetually frightened, so it worked fine for how terrified I was," he says.

During his senior year, he interned at Minnesota Public Radio. "At the time I felt torn between academia and the arts," says Lind, who also took visual arts classes at Macalester. Radio seemed like a happy compromise—intellectual yet artsy. He ended up using a prestigious fellowship that would pay for \$32,000 of tuition at any graduate school to study radio production at The New School in New York.

Lind hasn't focused exclusively on radio—his short film *Barbara Leather* screened on New York public TV, and a documentary he co-produced, *Stranger: Bernie Worrell on Earth*, screened at Slamdance and other film festivals. Even the best movie, however, cannot match the intimacy of a good, live storytelling show. Storytelling works best in a small venue, when the audience gets a deep, honest, glimpse into the storyteller's life. "*Told* allows you to be open and honest and in the moment because it feels—in the best possible way—like everybody is just hanging out," says John Knefel '05, a standup comedian who has performed at *Told* with his sister, Molly Knefel '08.

Although many of the stories performed at *Told* are funny, some of the best are serious. In a recent event, performer Jeff Zimmerman broke down on stage while talking about the depression that set in after his bout with testicular cancer. Raw, emotional moments like these break down barriers between performer and audience. Says Lind: "A lot of people have come up to me after *Told* and said, 'I've never been to anything like this before.'"

"I think narrative is inherently satisfying because it gives meaning to chaos." ■

HANNAH CLARK '02 is an associate editor at Inc. magazine and a freelance writer living in New York.



Haiti and the book *Three Cups of Tea* may have brought media attention to international relief work, but Mac alums have been at it all along.

BY | BETH HAWKINS

For two years, **Erica Kaster '02** got up early every day in a small house in Kadugli, a town just north of the bitterly contested Bayei region that lies on the border between northern and southern Sudan. Every other day a local man used his donkey to deliver a barrel of water to fill an overhead tank, from which she showered before walking next door to the regional office of the small development agency where she worked. It was typically 10 at night before she walked back. Her house often had no electricity, so before she fell into bed she would brush her teeth in the dark, using bottled water.

In the intervening hours, Kaster's job was nothing less than smoothing Sudan's transition from genocide and civil war to democracy and peace. Since 1983, nearly 2 million Sudanese have been killed and 4 million displaced by one of history's most brutal conflicts. Even though a peace treaty was signed in January 2005, local conflicts continue to threaten to destabilize various regions of the country.



Using grants from the U.S. Agency for International Development, Kaster looked for ways to help local government and NGOs create “peace dividends”: basic and badly needed infrastructure and public service improvements that might provide the secondary benefit of sowing seeds of confidence in the government. On any given day, this might mean she and her team of 25 Sudanese colleagues were responsible for activities as ambitious as organizing a tribal peace conference or as pragmatic as drilling for a new village water supply.

More often, however, her life was a logistical marathon. “Much of my time was spent trying to figure out why the Internet was down or how to fix the generator or how to get an office vehicle out of a muddy ditch in the middle of nowhere,” says Kaster. “It’s sometimes really mundane and frustrating work.”

During both her stints in Sudan—in the summer of 2006 and from September 2007 to May 2009—Kaster struggled to stay optimistic that meaningful change was truly possible. Now she works in



Opposite, top: A house in the Argentine town where Elizabeth Fleming '93 now works. **Opposite, bottom:** Erica Kaster '02 at a meeting between international relief organizations and leaders of a pastoralist group near the contested Somali border town of Abyei. The pastoralists were seeking a solution to land use issues, issues that become highly contentious during the dry season when people from different communities must access the same water points. **Above:** Erica Kaster '02 (far right) with the pastoralist group. **Below:** Wendy Guyot '97 in 2005 with an Uzbek refugee who was seeking temporary asylum in Kyrgyzstan.

Washington, D.C., for the USAID division that funded her work in Sudan, as a program manager for Kenya.

Kaster is typical of a new generation of international development workers: Tough, highly educated, and determined to use their specialized skills where they will yield measurable, sustainable results—if not necessarily the most glory. All too aware that aid funds are scarce, she and her colleagues are trained to make sure that every dollar is used productively.

Because the most effective organizations concentrate on building local capacity and therefore employ very few expatriates, competition for jobs in the field is fierce. Most new entrants need internships, a degree from a top-ranked graduate school, and possibly even specialized knowledge of a particular region or country. Once they find a job, they can expect to labor—frequently doing something as unromantic as paperwork—in harsh conditions for middling wages.

“When I am in the United States I still meet people who think I’m a volunteer,” laughs **Wendy Guyot '97**, who has worked abroad on



and off since graduating from Macalester. “The hardest thing is getting your foot in the door, getting your first overseas position. It’s *very* competitive.”

Last year, Guyot completed a stint in southern Sudan overseeing a portfolio of projects for the International Rescue Committee. Her job was to figure out what services refugees needed to return home. “My staff used focus-group methodology in communities where people have come back from wherever they were during the conflict,” she

says. “For me a lot of it was office work. We’re tasked with safeguarding donor money. There is more focus on accountability. It’s a lot of management, human resources, budgeting, keeping donors informed. It’s not always this glorious out-in-the-village-every-day thing. It can be 16-hour days. It’s hot or cold or there’s bugs or you’ve got food poisoning or you’ve got tapeworms or you’ve got amoebas.”

Greg Olson '78 recently completed his first year as head of a USAID-funded program to help farmers in southwest Afghanistan plant crops to replace illicit opium poppies. The job, managing pro-



Left: Greg Olson '78 (second from left) on a field visit in Afghanistan. His USAID-funded program distributed wheat seed and fertilizer to Afghan farmers. **Middle:** A garment trade fair organized by a USAID Afghani women's garment production program. **Right:** A farewell party for Greg Olson '78, shown here with local staff in the Farah Province of Afghanistan, November 2009.

grams in four of the most insecure provinces in the country, “has been the toughest challenge I’ve ever faced,” he says, although “the rewards are great, too. Our Afghan staff members are incredibly courageous—they face the threat of execution if they’re identified at Taliban checkpoints as working for the program. My security contractor would rather I stayed inside the armed compounds or military bases where I stay when in the field, but I try to get out whenever possible.”

Ultimately, the challenges are worthwhile, all agree. “It’s great work for problem-solvers, for people who like to think analytically about, ‘Why didn’t this work this time and what would work next time,’” says Kaster.

Both Kaster and Guyot chose Macalester for its international studies program, the first at a private liberal arts college anywhere when it was founded in 1949 and still one of only a handful. Today the International Studies Department is complemented by the International Center, which runs the college’s study abroad programs, and the Institute for Global Citizenship, a five-year-old initiative to expand Macalester’s commitment to transnational scholarship, leadership, and service. In addition to a major or minor in international studies, students can choose recently created concentrations in global citizenship, community and global health, and human rights and humanitarianism.

International Studies is one of the most popular subjects at Macalester. During each of the last five years, 10 to 15 percent of incoming freshmen have said they intend to major in it. A significant majority of international studies graduates go on to post-graduate work within five years, often at such prestigious universities as Cambridge, Chicago, Columbia, Georgetown, Harvard, the London School of Economics, Princeton, and Yale.

Both Kaster and Guyot went on to earn master’s degrees from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, one of a number of universities to offer highly specialized training to would-be development workers. The availability of focused degrees in areas

such as post-conflict economics or monitoring and evaluation is a key factor behind the professionalization of the field, says Kaster.

Equally important are internships and other opportunities to gain hands-on experience. After completing an internship in China in 2007, **Anne Johnson '09** knew she wanted to work in international public service. After graduating last spring, she spent 10 weeks in Tajikistan working to combat human trafficking on a fellowship the University of Minnesota Law School makes available to people from the Upper Midwest who want to pursue human rights work. She was the only expatriate on the project, which made her writing skills particularly valuable.

In Tajikistan, Johnson designed a website for the International Organization for Migration and compiled case studies of women who had been forced to work in brothels and men who were coerced into agricultural or construction work abroad. To do her work, Johnson “had to become steeped in the details.” At first, she was bowled over by the gritty realities of modern slavery. “If you’re a woman and you’ve been trafficked as a sex slave from a small village, it takes a lot to come back and reestablish your life,” she recalls. “My whole office would stop when we would get a call about someone who had been brought back and who needed help right then.” In February of this year, Johnson returned to China to start a job with a study abroad program.

Johnson recognized that her ability to convey to funders the urgency of the organization’s work was more valuable than dealing directly with trafficking victims. That pragmatic mindset is typical of Macalester students who gravitate to transnational work, says Ahmed Samatar, dean of the Institute for Global Citizenship and the James Wallace Professor of International Studies. “You can stay in the office making sure things are moving smoothly or you can be out digging a well for water,” says Samatar. “Behind the scenes or in front, it does not matter. The important thing is that it is a life lived with others.”

Empowering students to approach challenges from the humane perspective of a global citizen is one of Macalester’s highest missions,



“One of the great things about Macalester was that it helped me understand the concept of worldview,” **Elizabeth Fleming '93** says. “As I moved to various states and within subcultures I was able to process cultural differences better. I think I am more hopeful. The more I see of the world the more I see that despite overwhelming obstacles—corruption, poverty, horrific mistreatment of women and children—people can find creative solutions and make life-giving choices.”



Left: Anne Johnson '09 visiting a wholesale market in Tajikistan. **Right:** Johnson (second from right) with Mukarrama Burkhanova, director of the IOM Countertrafficking Unit in Tajikistan, and the children of another colleague.

says Samatar. “It’s not just, ‘Help those who are over there,’” he explains. “It is making a life with others. It becomes even more difficult when that life with others is precarious because of the circumstances. Then the full energy of that individual is called for to engage in making that life.”

Samatar challenges students to continually question their assumptions, a process he says requires “a deep respect for loving truth-telling.” Without this humility, it’s difficult to assess what contribution is most valuable in any given situation, he says. During her junior year, Johnson took part in a semester-long seminar led by Samatar in Brussels. “Samatar was one of the professors who pushed me the most,” she recalls. “He said, ‘You have this potential, you just need to do it.’”

Guyot also studied with Samatar. “He really forced you to articulate your opinion and take a stance,” she recalls. “He seemed to value instinct as much as fact. It was okay to say, ‘This is how I feel about something.’”

Because they are so closely involved with desperate people and because returns on even the most heroic efforts often seem incremental, one the biggest challenges development workers face is retaining a sense of optimism. You have to believe you can bring value to even the most daunting problems, they say.

Working abroad has helped physician **Elizabeth Fleming '93** recover a positive worldview. Until recently, Fleming was clinical director at an immigration detention center in the United States. “While I found that job rewarding, it didn’t do anything to make a long-term change in the tragic situation of millions of people who are making the dangerous trek to the United States just to bring their families out of desperate poverty,” she says.

Indulging a long-simmering interest in transnational development, Fleming now works in Argentina for a small religious nonprofit engaged in “neighborhood transformation,” a holistic approach to community health. “One of the great things about Macalester was that it helped me understand the concept of worldview,” she says. “As I moved to various states and within subcultures I was able to process cultural differences better. I think I am more hopeful. The more I see of the world the more I see that despite overwhelming obstacles—corruption, poverty, horrific mistreatment of women and children—people can find creative solutions and make life-giving choices.”

Rachel Trotta '07 was also eager to work in South America, especially after spending six months in Cochabamba, Bolivia, during her junior year, studying indigenous rights and other issues. Her brother, a physician, knew she was determined to go back after graduation. When he learned that some friends were opening a clinic in Bolivia,

he put Trotta in touch with them. She signed on as the clinic’s coordinator, the person responsible for helping patients—many of whom lived deep in the rain forest far from even rudimentary services—understand their diagnoses and follow through on their care.

“It was a tough year,” says Trotta. “There was a lot of death. The realities were on such a different scale.” One patient died of complications from an untreated urinary tract infection. Another almost died when his broken nose wouldn’t stop bleeding; Trotta managed to get him to a city hospital just in time. “I went there thinking doctors have the knowledge, why do I have to be there?” she says. “But I realized some interventions are really small, and really basic.”

Trotta now works at a shelter for homeless people in her home state of Oregon. “It’s very similar,” she says. “In Bolivia, I was working with an indigenous population that was looked down on by people living in the cities. In Portland, I am working with a homeless population that’s looked down on by those who are not experiencing homelessness.”

Now, when people ask Trotta what contribution from them would be most valuable, she counsels awareness. “Just knowing we’re resource rich,” she says. “Being aware of the difference between going somewhere with a helping hand and going there with a skilled or focused hand.”

“Our time has thrown up many challenges: poverty; the condition of women; freedom; and the survival of individual human beings,” says Samatar. “I have been gratified by interacting with many high-performing and caring students. I am gratified to see them succeed at Macalester’s academic challenges and then later on in life when they have brought their talents to these challenges.”

Ultimately, international relief work is as fulfilling as it is demanding. “I don’t see myself doing anything else for a while,” says Guyot. “I really do think we improve the lives of the people in the places where we work.” ■

BETH HAWKINS is a freelance writer based in Minneapolis.

TOP PEACE CORPS SCHOOL For the fifth year in a row, Macalester College has placed on the Peace Corps’ list of top colleges nationwide producing Peace Corps volunteers. With 19 alumni currently serving as Peace Corps volunteers, Macalester is number 7 in this year’s rankings among small-sized colleges and universities, moving up from number 9 in last year’s ranking. Since Peace Corps was founded in 1961, 326 Macalester alumni have served in it.

ADMISSIONS

MANIA

Calm Down, Think Ahead, and Other Advice on Getting into College

BY | LAURA BILLINGS

Back in the late '60s, when Lee Nystrom '73 was a promising football player from Minnesota farm country, he dismissed Dartmouth as "too far away" and Gustavus Adolphus as "too familiar" and decided on Macalester. "Beyond that, I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about it," he says.

His daughter Ali Nystrom '10 had much more on her mind when she toured the campus in 2006. Her visit was part of a cross-country college scouting trip from Maine to Washington state spent poring over the *Princeton Review*, while headlines warned of record levels of rejection letters for even the most hopeful high school seniors.

"When it came to applying to colleges these days," Lee says. "I was pretty clueless."

As for Ali, "I was really stressed."

This study in contrasts may be familiar to Macalester grads on the far side of 40, who are now returning to the college admissions process with their own sons and daughters. "Back when we were doing this, our parents barely paid attention," says Donna Kelly, a former director of Macalester's High Winds Fund and now a partner with College Connectors, a Minneapolis consulting firm for college-bound students. Though services like hers were once reserved for East Coast elites aiming for the most prestigious schools, Kelly says her clients are now "just normal people" struggling to navigate an increasingly complex process and growing anxiety about actually *getting in*.

"There is more competition for top colleges," admits Macalester Assistant Dean of Admissions Nancy Mackenzie '69. "But there's also a lot more hype," she says, which distracts parents and prospective students from a goal that has remained unchanged from one generation to the next—"finding the school that feels like it will be the right fit for the next four years."

Here, some lessons from Macalester about how to find the right college fit for the young person in your life.

Understanding the Numbers

Twenty years ago, Macalester's admission staff read about 2,000 applications annually. By 2008, applications topped out at 5,000—all for roughly the same number of spots in the freshman class. With trends like this at colleges across the country, it's no wonder so many admissions websites now contain helpful advice to applicants about how to "*breathe deeply*."

"One reason we're seeing these numbers is there's a sense now that everyone needs a college degree, and so more people are applying to college than would have a generation ago," explains Lorne Robinson, dean of admissions and financial aid. At the same time, the so-called "Baby Boom Echo" created its own demographic wave, cresting in 2009 with 3.2 million graduating seniors—the most in American history.

Still another reason for the surge is that applying to college has never been simpler: With little more than a credit card and the click of a button, students can send an electronic Common Application form across the country in seconds. With the rise in "fast-track" applications, hundreds of colleges now send admission forms to select students, with offers to waive everything from personal essays to application fees and a promise of a quick response. (Macalester does not do this.) While this approach can be a boon to overburdened seniors, fast-track applications also allow colleges to capture more applications which, in turn, boosts the "selectivity rates" that figure into the ranking books that colleges love to hate.

Ellen Merlin '83, a college counselor at St. Paul's Central High School, has watched application numbers creep up over the last decade. "When I started, we used to recommend applying to three or four schools, and now we recommend four to six," she says, noting that she's seen students applying to as many as "ten to fifteen" highly competitive colleges.

This results in more work for admissions staffs and may have diminishing returns for students. "It has become a kind of circular logic," says Robinson. "Because people are concerned about the competition, they apply to more colleges, so there are more applications out there, so the application numbers go up, and the admission rate goes down, which feeds the anxiety that you need to apply to more schools," he says. "I just read an application from a student who had applied to 19 schools."



It's a family affair

No discussion about the admissions process would be complete without a nod to the nation's ranks of so-called "helicopter parents," who pore over *U.S. News & World Report* college rankings and pepper campus tour guides with questions that leave them wondering who



will actually be coming to campus in the fall—the parents or the kids?

"It's what we in the admissions world affectionately call 'pronoun confusion,'" explains Robinson. "We are not applying to college. We are not moving into the dorms in September—but this generation of parents has a really hard time separating themselves from their kids." He adds that when his department declines an application, "We almost always hear from the parents, rarely the students. And they take it *very* personally."

While helicopter parents have become an easy target, Kelly says blaming them for all that's changed in the college admissions process misses the mark. "This is a generation that's really involved with their kids. Our kids are closer to us, and in many cases, they're turning to us for help," she says. Now factor in soaring comprehensive college costs, which at some schools have moved past \$50,000 a year, and it's easy to understand how applying to college has become a family affair. As Kelly points out, "What other \$120,000 investment decision are you going to trust entirely to your 17-year-old?"

Understanding the sticker price

Concerns about affordability have only intensified since the recent economic downturn. "When need-based financial aid developed in the 1960s and '70s, it was a program for people of lesser means, but now the costs are such that *most* families will need help with college expenses," says Brian Lindeman '89, director of financial aid. "We have families now who never thought they'd enter the financial aid process, whose assets have just evaporated."

In a climate like this, it's tempting for families to cross colleges off a student's wish list based on sticker price alone. "But that's a mistake," he says, "because they should really be exploring a school's financial aid program before assuming they would pay that much." For instance, two-thirds of Macalester's students receive financial aid, with an average first-year need-based award of \$31,838. Subtract that from \$46,942—the cost of tuition and fees, room and board for 2009–2010



year—and the needle drops down to \$15,104 for the average financial aid recipient.

While tuition at public universities is generally less than that of private colleges, experts say that's not the only cost to consider. A recent report from the Institute for College Access & Success in Berkeley found that 2008 graduates from all Minnesota colleges (both public and private) graduated with an average student debt of \$25,558—the fourth highest in the nation. Coming in at the bottom of the state's student debt were Macalester grads, who left campus with an average debt load of \$17,304 in 2008. "Sticker shock is one of our biggest problems," says Lindeman, noting that some students don't explore Mac further once they see the sticker price. "But when they learn more about our financial aid program, it's clear that families of all kinds of income backgrounds can come to Macalester."

Although Lindeman advises families to prepare themselves for the financial picture of college by visiting the College Board website (collegeboard.com) for an estimate of what they might be expected to pay for college, Kelly advises families to consider another number that may have even more impact on the bottom line. "We really encourage families to take a hard look at retention and graduation rates, because about a quarter of kids nationwide don't return to the school they started in, and only about half graduate within six years," says Kelly. Because a fifth or sixth year of college can easily wipe out whatever a family "saved" by picking a less expensive school, "you need to think about finding a college that you can graduate from in four years," says Kelly. "Not just one that you can get into."

Finding "the one"

With college websites, online rankings, and the rise of social media, finding statistics and other comparisons of campus life has never been easier. "Unfortunately, with so much information at their fingertips, one of the biggest mistakes I see is that families are not using it," says Jill Apple, co-director of college counseling at St. Paul Academy and Summit School, a private K–12 school near Macalester. Though offices like hers can provide demographic reports and sophisticated "scattergrams" to show how a student fits a school's academic profile, or doesn't fit at all, "You still hear parents say, 'Well, let's apply anyway—it's all just a crashshoot.'"



"I don't know any admissions officer who has a roulette wheel on their desk," Apple says, noting that admissions staff members are very clear on both the character of their institutions and the criteria they expect prospective students to meet. For that reason, a successful college search doesn't start with status ranking lists—it starts with the student. "It starts with being self-reflective and knowing what your interests are," says Apple.

Central High School's Merlin says that while many parents focus on possible careers, they would do better to support the interests and talents most likely to lead their offspring to their own version of success. "If you know what your passions are, that's what sets you apart in a college application," she says.

WOULD YOU GET INTO MAC TODAY?

“THE COMPETITION to get into Macalester is much more intense than it was in my day,” says trustee Lee Nystrom ’73. “My classmates and I laugh that if we had to apply today, they wouldn’t let us in.”

Could Baby Boomers compete successfully against their own kids’ college apps? “Certainly, if you applied when there were 2,000 other applicants compared to today when there are 5,000, there would be people who wouldn’t be able to get in,” says Dean of Admissions Lorne Robinson. But alumni who give themselves long odds at succeeding in today’s college market need to factor in the new math that’s taken hold since they left high school.

“With grade inflation, a B+ is now the average high school grade—you have to be asleep in class to get a C,” says Robinson, adding that the rise of College Board prep courses means the 1250 you got on your SAT 20 years ago translates to about a 1350 in today’s terms.

But if the numbers are relative, what about the resumé’s? Baby boomers spent their summers flipping burgers, while their children burnish their resumé’s digging wells in Third World countries. “It’s all a function of the times in which people are applying,” says Nancy Mackenzie ’69, assistant dean of admissions, noting that community service has become an expected item on college applications. In the end, she says, there’s no way of knowing how your application 30 or 40 years ago would fare in today’s market, because “if we were applying now, we’d all apply very differently.”

The best way to help themselves, says admissions dean Robinson, “is to make sure that their story comes through in an authentic way. The academic piece has to be there, because that’s a deal breaker. But we’re looking for good students and interesting people, and there are lots of applicants who will fit that definition. The best applications are the ones that you finish and say, ‘I know what this person is all about. I know what makes him tick. I know what makes her eyes light up.’”

Passion. Light in the eyes. The perfect match. With so much emotion involved in college matchmaking, it’s no wonder that admissions counselors often sound as if they’re dealing in dating advice. Kelly says that many high school students she meets start the college process hoping “to go out with the cutest guy in high school”—i.e. the tallest, handsomest, highest ranked, hardest-to-get-into college they can find. But she urges them to look beyond the usual quarterbacks and class presidents to find the quieter types that don’t grab all the attention. In other words: when you learn everything you can about the less traveled campuses, one of them may become the best match.

This doesn’t mean there won’t be some broken hearts when admission letters start coming back to high school seniors. “Two of the colleges I applied to turned me down,” says Ali Nystrom ’10, whom we introduced at the beginning of this story. “At the time, it was devastating, but looking back I think it was a really great decision on the part of their admissions offices to say, ‘Hey, you don’t fit here.’ They were right. I’ve loved everything about Macalester and my experience here—I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

Collin Calvert ’13, a Nebraska native who came to Macalester after applying to nine different schools, may be just finishing his first year, but already feels this “is where I was meant to be.” His advice to prospective parents and students: “Don’t start at the last minute. Take it one day at a time. And trust that it’s all going to work out in the end.” **M**

LAURA BILLINGS, a *St. Paul* writer, is a frequent contributor to *Macalester Today*.

ADMISSIONS DO’S AND DON’TS

Do start thinking about college early.

“Even if you have a kindergartener, doing some calculations at the College Board website can help cut down on sticker shock when the time comes,” says financial aid director Brian Lindeman ’89. Encouraging junior high schoolers to take rigorous classes in high school allows them to “keep more of their options open” when they’re ready to apply to college, says college counselor Ellen Merlin ’83.

Do nag if necessary. “The most annoying but useful thing my family did for me was never let me forget that I needed to think about college,” says Collin Calvert ’13. “They really wanted me to have all the opportunities I could to succeed.”

Do visit campus if you can. Nearly a third of all college applications are “stealth applicants” who reveal themselves to admissions staff only at deadline time. While

the Internet is a great tool, actually visiting a campus can tell prospective students if online research and on-campus reality actually line up.

Do visit a class. “Preferably two—one in a subject you think you might study and another that’s completely outside your field,” says admissions dean Lorne Robinson. Priorities may shift, and you want to make sure you’re at a school that can flex with you.

Do let your kids ask the questions. “Parents need to step out of the way” for part of the campus visit, says assistant admissions dean Nancy Mackenzie ’69, who recommends sending students to soak up the atmosphere on their own for a few hours. Save your questions for the parents-only meetings that many campuses now offer.

Do simplify your finances. “Many families fear that the financial aid process is a cold, hard calculation with no entry point for real life circumstances, but that’s not the case,” says Lindeman. Even so, families with more complicated finances—multiple car loans, second mortgages, and the like—“often don’t

have enough room in the family budget to adjust” to even the most favorable packages.

Don’t ask for an instant opinion. “Don’t get in the car after a campus visit and ask, ‘What did you think? What did you think?’” advises college consultant Donna Kelly. “Give it time to rest, and give your student time to reflect.”

Don’t be fooled by first impressions. Whether you liked your tour guide, what you thought of the food, and even the day’s weather can all color your impressions of a campus, but they probably don’t paint the full picture. “I was actually more comfortable at a different school because I had more in common with the tour guide,” says Calvert. “But because I’d done my research, I knew Macalester was more like me.”

Don’t do the sure thing. Conventional wisdom has long held that every student should apply to at least one sure thing, one college they’re guaranteed to get into. “But who wants to go to their safety school?” asks Kelly. Select a range of schools you’d actually be happy to attend.

New York port boss
Chris Ward '76
standing at Ground
Zero in Manhattan.



PORT AUTHORITY PROJECTS

- World Trade Center site
- America's busiest airport system
- Six tunnels and bridges between New York and New Jersey
- Marine terminals and ports
- The PATH rail transit system
- The Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan

TRANSIT MAN

Chris Ward '76 oversees New York's bridges, rail systems, airports—and the World Trade Center site.

BY **JAN SHAW-FLAMM '76**

Chris Ward '76 came to Macalester on a whim. Eager for a change from the East Coast, he hitchhiked out to visit Beloit College, but things just didn't click. When he called home to report his disappointment, Ward's father, then president of Amherst College, recalled a student who had spoken highly of Macalester. So he said, "Why don't you go up there and see what it looks like?"

"So I hitchhiked up to Macalester," says Ward. "It's a bright, sunny, snowy day, everybody was out and about, and it looked fantastic. I decided, 'I'm going here if they'll accept me.' And I had a great time."

In fact, as a first-year student Ward had so much fun he co-founded one of the legendary great times—Springfest. The organizational skills he honed then continue to serve him well today: Ward runs what may be the most complex public service organization in America—the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. But his wasn't exactly a conventional career path.

After earning a double major in history and religious studies and taking on a few decidedly non-academic jobs (including ranch hand and off-shore oil rig roustabout), Ward earned a master's in theological studies. Finding academia too solitary, he discovered a passion for public service.

After working with General Contractors Association of New York, American Stevedoring, Inc., and New York's Department of Environmental Protection, Ward was appointed executive director of the Port Authority in 2008 by New York Governor David Paterson. The Port Authority is responsible for infrastructure—including the World Trade Center site, maritime ports, Kennedy and LaGuardia airports, and the George Washington Bridge—critical to the quality of lives and livelihood of the more than 17 million people who live and work in New York and New Jersey.

What's it like to have such mindboggling responsibility? "I love my job," says Ward. "Every day is different and challenging." After the attempted terrorist attack on a Northwest plane last Christmas, his office spent two weeks working with the federal government on aviation policy and how it affects New York's five area airports. Other days he's dealing with "huge pieces of infrastructure like the George Washington Bridge" or the rapidly evolving shipping industry. "There's not a day when this place doesn't give you an opportunity to struggle with how a region builds and maintains itself and connects with the rest of the world. That's what I love about it."

PHOTO BY **MICHAEL CROUSER**

His job's most high profile aspect may be the 16-acre redevelopment project on the site of the former World Trade Center, "the most complicated public works project in the United States." Says Ward, "The emotional need to fill this hole" has resulted in a 16-acre project that includes the tallest skyscraper in America, 7 million feet of spec office space, and the United States' largest public memorial, with a completely new vision for downtown, all of which will cost \$12 billion.

It would be a mammoth undertaking even without the emotional component. Every few months Ward meets with families who lost loved ones in the 9-11 terrorist attack, with whom he has a certain credibility. In September 2001 he was the Port Authority's chief of strategic planning, with offices on the 67th floor of the north tower of the World Trade Center. "I was running down Vesey Street when the first tower came down on top of us, but luckily I was saved by a pedestrian overpass," he says. Ward was trapped in a freight loading dock under the overpass until firemen led him out. When the second tower came down, the office evacuated to New Jersey. (Now Port Authority offices are back in the city, near Union Square.)

The World Trade Center project requires balancing the concerns of those for whom this will never be neutral ground with the questionable need for additional office space in a city hard hit by the economic downturn. The multiple interests of the many stakeholders, public and private, have slowed development of the project at the same time that people are clamoring for progress. "We have an incredible mandate to deliver this memorial by the 10-year anniversary," says Ward.

By that date the Memorial Plaza, with its fountains, trees, and parapets with the names of those lost, will be completed. The rest of the public infrastructure, such as the transit center and streets, are under construction. But the office construction—the private part of the project—has been delayed due to the recession.

This huge project sounds impossible, but Ward declares, "It ain't! That's the beauty of New York. It's difficult but doable. Public service gives people the opportunity to do things they care about at an earlier age than they ever could in the private sector."

Ward boils down his years of strategic public planning to this: "In some respects public service comes down to convincing people to say yes. People's natural instincts are to say no. It's easier because to say yes will bring about change. For whatever reason, I've become good at getting people to say yes." **M**

JAN SHAW-FLAMM '76 is a communications department staff writer and regular contributor to Macalester Today.



Mac Weddings



1 **Camila Gonzalez '04** and Tom Abraham were married on October 10, 2009, in Savage, Minnesota. They were joined by (from left): Francisco Gonzalez '95, Anne Marie Gonzalez '93, Sharif Khan '04, Cindy Khan '03, and Ricardo Gonzalez '99.

2 **Sarah Crangle '04** and **Andrew Odegaard '02** were married on August 22, 2009, in Piedmont, Calif. Many Mac alumni attended.

3 **Wes Breazeale '93** and Tirzah Jacob were married August 1, 2009, in Portland, Oregon.

4 **Christiane Sauer Joyce '99** and Tristan Joyce were married on August 1, 2009, in Iowa City. With them were (from left): Angeline Sauer '98, Sarah Puro '99, Caryn Kelly, Jon Dehning '97, Tracy Powell Iwaskow '99, Rebecca Noran '99, Angela Sidman '99, and Krista Coulson '98.

5 **Christine Hartelt '87** and Dan Luck were married February 27, 2009, in Madison, Wis. They renewed their vows with their families present on June 27, 2009. Between them they have five teenagers.

6 **Martiga Lohn '90** and Erik Steinmetz were married January 17, 2009, at the University of Minnesota. The bride and groom are shown here with attendant Andy Steiner-Manning '90 (left).





7 Sabina Vogt '96 and Rudy del Rosario were married in Puerto Galero, Mindoro, Philippines, on June 13, 2009. Mac friends attending were Kirsten Vogt '93, Crystal Henle '96, and Courtney Breed '96.



8 Sudha Setty '05 and Evan Kennedy '05 were married on August 2, 2008, in Oak Brook, Ill. Many Mac friends attended.



9 Chrissy Newcombe '02 and Damon Dahlheimer '02 were married in St. Paul on September 18, 2009. Mac friends are shown with them at the James J. Hill reference library.



10 Mike Occhicone '00 and Kiyomi Komori were married on August 22, 2009, in Eugene, Oregon. Macalester alumni in attendance were (from left): Sam Randel '00, Karl Wassman '00, Paul Aleckson '00, John Shepard '00, and Eric Klinker '01.



11 Austin Kennedy '00 and Abby Longstreet were married on July 18, 2009, in Des Moines, Iowa. Alumni attending were (back row, from left): Seth Benzinger '99, Mike Lens '00, Matt Myers '00, Rachel Geiger '00, Eric Yurkovich '00; (front row, from left): Molly Manning Lens '00, Jon Matson '00, Keith Bitzenhofer '00, and Nate Hedtke '00.



12 Jeremy Hanson '95 and Samuel Willis '96 were married on October 4, 2009, in Minneapolis. Shown here (front row, from left): Minh Ta '97, Sarah Newton '96, Elizabeth Adinolfi '94, Bah Payson '95; (second row, from left): Michael Khorsandi, Samuel Hanson Willis '96 and Jeremy Hanson Willis '95, Naomi Dean '96, Ethan Roberts '96; (third row, from left): Dan Moore '96, Jon Copans '96, Laura Raymond '96, Adrienne Christensen (faculty), Dan Becker '94, and Melissa Fuller '95.

Mac Weddings



1



2



3



4

1 Sonya Michlin '96 and Stephen Gordon were married April 6, 2008, in San Francisco. Mac friends were (from left): Federico Barbagli, Danielle O'Hare '95 (with daughter Noemi), Genoveva Castaneda '96, Meleck Davis '96, Becky Stewart '95, Tamara Nadel '95 (with baby Loretta), and Lempi Miller '95.

2 Johanna Hall '04 and Jeremy Manalis were married Aug. 29, 2009, at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu, N.M., with many Macites attending.

3 Callie PaStarr '07 and Roscoe Sopiwnik '06 were married September 5, 2009, on the senior Sopiwniks' farm near Fredric, Wis. Most of the crowd pictured are Mac grads; Trina PaStarr '10 is shown at far right.

4 Dave Mao '97 and Laura Phillips '99 were finally married on August, 8, 2008, in St. Paul, with many Mac friends joining in the celebration.

5 Anna Plumb '05 and Daniel Sword '05 were married July 25, 2009, in Portland, Ore. Alex Freeburg '05 officiated, and many other Mac alumni attended.



5

WHY YOU SHOULD COME BACK FOR REUNION

BY **GABRIELLE LAWRENCE '73**, DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS



The Macalester Reunion will be here soon—June 4–6—and I hope you'll be here too. It's a beautiful time on campus and we've planned a weekend that has something for everyone. You could spend the entire weekend attending interesting lectures, receptions, and discussions or you could sit around with old friends and solve the world's problems all over again. You could walk to the river, check out the Leonard Center's amazing workout facilities, and then eat a piece of cake in the Campus Center.

You'll marvel at the accomplishments and poise of our students as they wrangle golf carts and pour beverages, and you'll enjoy meeting a whole new generation of Macalester faculty, some of whom look as young as the students. Young alumni will enjoy live music with their musician classmates and M Club athletes will lead a kickball tournament. And if you thought President Rosenberg was entertaining in that President's Day video, you're sure to love Breakfast with Brian on Saturday morning! There's something for everybody this year:

- If you like bagpipes, look for serenades, parades, and band concerts
- If your class is not among the official reunion classes, you're welcome anyway
- If you're curious about what the college is like today, talk with faculty and students
- If you're an honored elder, join us for High Tea on Friday afternoon
- If you're in the class of 2005, come to midnight breakfast on Friday and feast on cheesy eggs
- If you remember the early '70s, Foxglove plays on Saturday night
- If you were an Ambassador for Friendship or a member of the 1998 champion women's soccer team, your teammates and fellow Ambassadors look forward to seeing you
- If you're a Macalester faculty member, catch up with your favorite former students at Saturday's Zero-Waste picnic
- If you lived off campus, worked full time, and don't think you know anybody, this is your chance to live on campus and meet your new best friends
- If you're a member of the class of 1960, this is it! You only have one 50th class reunion.

Reunion turns out to be a surprisingly meaningful time for people because it's not just about reliving the past, it's about reconnecting and reenergizing for the future. There's a common set of values and a bit of shared quirkiness that binds Macalester alumni together across the generations. You are a member of this community. You belong here. Please come back and be part of it again. **M**

Register by **May 7, 2010** macalester.edu/reunion





Macalester Now on YouTube

Check out Macalester's new YouTube channel at [youtube.com/user/macalester](https://www.youtube.com/user/macalester) or click on the YouTube icon on macalester.edu.

There you can watch a video of a day in the life of our own very busy (and funny) President Brian Rosenberg. We've also posted assorted clips of students and campus life, as well as *The World Stage*, a compelling video about the difference Macalester makes in the lives of students and people around the world.

If you like what you see, share it with others. It's a great way to introduce Macalester to more people around the world.



GENEROUS GEOLOGIST

Rolland Oberg '60 might not have attended Macalester if he hadn't grown up right across the street. The St. Paul Central High School graduate lived with his parents in an apartment on the corner of St. Clair and Snelling Avenues, above what is now the St. Clair Broiler.

In paying for college he was helped by an Ordway Family Scholarship, one reason he has now made his own gift to Macalester. Oberg is providing for two endowed funds in his estate: a scholarship fund for geology students, which he has established in honor of his late parents Harry and Madelyn Oberg, and a research fund for collaborative faculty-student projects in geology.

Although he has long been generous to the college, Oberg was inspired to set up this larger gift because of his imminent 50th Reunion. (He's been an active member of the planning committee for this reunion.) "Macalester put me on a firm footing for my career" as an oil exploration geologist for Exxon, says Oberg. "The geology program and broad liberal arts education was an excellent preparation for graduate school," he adds. Oberg earned a PhD from the University of Iowa, where he frequently helped teach classes of up to 500 students. "It made me appreciate the small classes and individual attention we had at Mac."

His work at Exxon took him around the world, but Oberg is quick to point out, "I'm not a CEO. I'm just a regular person. But I can still do something for the college.

"I just want to make sure the students who are attending Mac 50 years after me have the chance to get the same education I did."



PHOTO: PAUL S. HOWELL

ALUMNI COLLEGE

SUMMER
SESSION

August 1-4, 2010
Macalester College

Join other inquisitive alumni for two and a half days of exploring with Macalester faculty and staff the many facets of sustainability.

- What do we know about Earth's changing climate?
- What are economic trade-offs for reducing our carbon footprints?
- What are the psychological and cultural barriers we face in reshaping our societies?

Register by July 1 macalester.edu/alumni/alumnicollege

Creating Sustainable Futures: Perspectives from Science, Economics, and Culture



William Moseley



Louisa Bradtmiller



James Doyle



Christina Manning



Roopali Phadke



Sarah West '91



Suzanne Savanick Hansen



Kelly MacGregor

The 2010 Alumni College faculty are all affiliated with Macalester's Environmental Studies Department.

BOOKS



Nancy Schatz Alton '92, *The Healthy Back Book: A Guide to Whole Healing for Outdoor Enthusiasts and Other Active People* and *The Healthy Knee Book: A Guide to Whole Healing for Outdoor Enthusiasts and Other Active People* (both Mountaineers Books, 2010)

Peter Bogananni '01, visiting instructor of writing at Macalester, *The House of Tomorrow* (Penguin/Putnam, 2010)

Lucy Forster-Smith, chaplain, *A Grammar of Transformation: Language Used By Non-Religiously Affiliated College Students in Describing Life Changing Experiences* (available from Amazon)



Floyd J. Hall '74, *So You Want to Be a Gourmet* (Xlibris, 2010, available at xlibris.com/FloydJ.Hall.html, Barnesandnoble.com, and Amazon.com)

Douglas Harper '70 and Caroline Knowles, *Hong Kong: Migrant Lives, Landscapes, and Journeys* (University of Chicago, 2010)



Josh Karp '88, *Straight Down the Middle: Shivas Irons, Bagger Vance, and How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love My Golf Swing* (Chronicle Books, 2010)

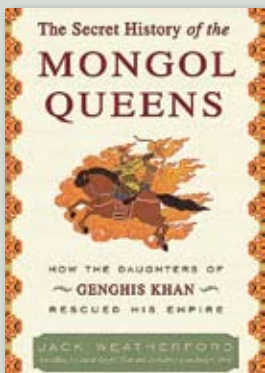
Jonathan Leo '86 and Sami Timimi, *Rethinking ADHD: From Brain to Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

Robert W. MacGregor '54, *Leadership: A Team Sport* (Galde Press, 2010, available from galdepress.com or 800-777-3454)

Karl Hagstrom Miller '90, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow* (Duke University, 2010)

Rebecca Jo Plant '90, *Mom: The Transformation of Motherhood in Modern America* (University of Chicago, 2010)

Kenneth Port '83, *Transcending Law: The Unintended Life of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution* (Carolina Academic Press, Durham, N.C., 2010)



P.A. Seasholtz '87, *Heart of Hauden* (Dog Ear Publishing, 2010)

Jack Weatherford, professor of anthropology, *The Secret History of Mongol Queens: How the Daughters of Genghis Khan Rescued His Empire* (Random House, 2010)

1932

Oliver C. Severson, 100, of Minneapolis died Nov. 4, 2009. He is survived by a daughter and a son.

1936

Stephen G. Borstad, 97, of Slidell, La., died Jan. 9, 2010. He worked for Travelers Insurance Company for 36 years, eventually becoming a regional director in the company's Hartford, Conn., home office. Mr. Borstad is survived by his wife, Edna, two sons, two grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

Clarence H. Kroning, 97, of Naples, Fla., died Oct. 31, 2009. He served in the Navy during World War II and retired in 1977 after 28 years as vice president of First National Bank in Minneapolis. Mr. Kroning is survived by his wife, **Audrey Rude Kroning '37**, two daughters, and two grandchildren.

1938

Deloris Femrite Hohenthauer, 92, of North St. Paul, Minn., died Oct. 27, 2009. She is survived by four daughters, two sons, nine grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and a brother.

Mary Woolsey Olson, 92, of Redding, Calif., died Dec. 11, 2009. Mrs. Olson is survived by four children and eight grandchildren.

1939

Virginia Mastenbrook Harrison, 91, died Dec. 12, 2008. She worked as a credit manager and personnel manager at Donaldson's in Edina, Minn. Mrs. Harrison is survived by a daughter and son.

Dorothy Marron Johnson, 92, died Nov. 10, 2009, in Vallejo, Calif. She taught English and Latin for more than 30 years at various schools. Mrs. Johnson is survived by two sons, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Edwin E. Koepke, 92, died Dec. 21, 2009. He worked for American Hoist and Derrick Company from 1940 to 1982. Mr. Koepke is survived by his wife, two sons, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1940

Jane Northfoss Dow, 89, died Nov. 29, 2007. She is survived by two sons, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Zona Brandt Meyers, 90, of Fulda, Minn., died Dec. 7, 2008. She was a clinical laboratory scientist at Worthington Medical Center for many years.

1942

James V. Brack, 90, died Oct. 2, 2009, in St. Louis. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and the Korean War. Mr. Brack is survived by a daughter, a son, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Harry A. Hadd, 90, of Boutwells, Minn., died Dec. 13, 2009. After 27 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, including service in World War II and Korea, Mr. Hadd retired as a colonel. He received the Legion of Merit for devising a method of supplying front-line troops that is still used today. Mr. Hadd is survived by his wife, **Helen Haeuster Hadd '43**, a daughter, a son, six grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, sister **Jeanne Hadd Reher '45**, and two brothers.

Frances Bloomfield Hamm, 89, of Mission Viejo, Calif., died Dec. 3, 2009. She is survived by two daughters, two grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

Robert L. King, 88, of Pensacola, Fla., died Sept. 21, 2009. He served in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps from 1942 to 1961, retiring from the Navy Reserve in 1972 as captain. He worked in private practice affiliated with the Medical Center Clinic and West Florida Regional Hospital as an ear, nose, and throat physician specialist until his retirement in 1989. Dr. King is survived by a son.

Faye Peterson Lowe, 88, of Yarmouthport, Mass., died Dec. 24, 2009. She is survived by two daughters (including **Patricia Lowe Buerklin '70**), three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

June Peterson Smith, 89, of Edina, Minn., died Dec. 26, 2009. She worked as a schoolteacher, travel agent, and nursery school teacher. Mrs. Smith is survived by her husband, Bruce, three daughters,

In Memoriam

five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

William H.A. Watson, 90, died Dec. 8, 2009, in Tucson, Ariz. He practiced as a physician at several hospitals from 1948 to 1985 and was a past president of the Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians, which also presented him with two Merit Awards. He served as Macalester's college and team physician for 25 years and received the college's Distinguished Citizen Award and the M Club's Lifetime Service Award. Dr. Watson is survived by his wife, **Jean Wetterlin Watson '43**, daughter **Lee Anne Watson Wilfert '74**, two grandchildren, and a sister.

1943

Shirley Dawson Gist, 88, of Zanesville, Ohio, died Dec. 27, 2009. She was an office manager for her husband, Joseph Gist, M.D. Mrs. Gist is survived by a son and a granddaughter.

Marjorie Oftelie Mudrovich, 87, of Wausau, Wis., died Dec. 7, 2009. She worked for Wausau Insurance Companies for 22 years, retiring as manager of business lines rating in 1988. Mrs. Mudrovich is survived by her husband, George, three sons, three grandchildren, and a brother.

1944

Lawrence C. Hedeem, 87, died Jan. 13, 2010, in Alexandria, Minn. He served in the U.S. Army as a courier and interpreter during World War II and was a lawyer for Standard Oil Company in Minneapolis, New York, and Chicago before his retirement in 1984. Mr. Hedeem is survived by his wife, Gladys, a son, four grandchildren, four stepchildren, and seven step-grandchildren.

Ellen Okagaki Schelstraete, 89, died Dec. 6, 2009, in Santa Maria, Calif. She retired from the University of California at Berkeley as an administrative assistant in the graduate minority program. Ms. Schelstraete is survived by a daughter, three sisters, and two brothers.

Donald R. Wahlund, 87, of Bloomington, Minn., died in the fall of 2009. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

He retired as superintendent of finance after 25 years with the Minneapolis Public Schools and served as a board member of the City-Council Federal Credit Union for 35 years. Mr. Wahlund is survived by his wife, Audrey, a son, five grandchildren, a great-granddaughter, and a sister.

1946

Priscilla Baumgarten Cady, 85, of Virginia Beach, Va., died Nov. 7, 2009. She was a hospital dietitian in La Jolla, Calif., and Amsterdam, N.Y. Mrs. Cady is survived by two daughters, three sons, and six grandchildren.

Helen Horstmann-Elder, 84, of Dubuque, Iowa, died Dec. 27, 2009. She is survived by four sons, eight grandchildren, a great-grandson, a sister, and a brother.

1947

Patricia Purdie Funston, 83, of St. Paul died Nov. 27, 2009. She is survived by a son, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Eleanore Rae Halverson, 84, died Oct. 16, 2009, in Marinette, Wis. She was a past president of the Minnesota Medical Association Auxillary and the Peace Pipe Girl Scout Council. Mrs. Halverson is survived by a son, three daughters, 15 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

James H. Marsden, 89, of Fargo, N.D., died Dec. 19, 2009. He is survived by a daughter and a son.

Rosemary Warfield Morse, 84, of Champlin, Minn., died Dec. 23, 2009. She worked for J.B. Hudson Jewelers. Mrs. Morse is survived by her husband, **Elmer Lou Morse '48**, three daughters (including **Mary Morse Marti '82**), son-in-law **Jim Marti '80**, and six grandchildren.

1949

Clinton A. Hoiseth, 84, of Paynesville, Minn., died Jan. 19, 2009. He is survived by his wife, **Janet Linderholm Hoiseth '46**, two daughters, a son, six grandchildren, and a brother.

Roger V. Lundblad, 87, died Nov. 16, 2009. He served as a quartermaster in the U.S. Navy

during World War II. He later worked as a teacher and school principal, and eventually retired after 18 years as manager of communications and data processing for Occidental Petroleum. Mr. Lundblad is survived by his wife, **Mary Schadegg Lundblad '50**, a daughter, two sons, and three grandchildren.

Robert W. Palmer, 87, died Nov. 28, 2009. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, rising to the rank of major. He was an internist in private practice and assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Indiana University School of Medicine. Dr. Palmer retired in 2003 after 50 years of practicing medicine. He is survived by his wife, Carol, four sons, a grandson, and brother **Richard Palmer '51**.

Dolores Feipel Tuttle, 82, of Corona del Mar, Calif., died Jan. 2, 2010. Mrs. Tuttle is survived by her husband, Gilbert Geis, two daughters, a son, and three grandchildren.

Douglas S. Young, 89, of St. Paul died Nov. 7, 2009. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and later worked for Minnesota Gov. LeVander's office, the St. Paul Schools superintendent's office, and the state of Minnesota. Mr. Young is survived by his wife, **Marjorie Reeve Young '49**, two daughters (including **Nancy Young-Dixon '75**), son **David Young '74**, 10 grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

1950

James L. Benepe, 82, of Sheridan, Wyo., died Dec. 23, 2009. He worked in the Veterans Affairs medical care system as a psychologist, chief of staff, and director and chief of psychiatry. Mr. Benepe is survived by his wife, Mary, two sons, a granddaughter, two sisters, and brother **Thomas Benepe '54**.

John S. Dunlop, 80, of Port Orchard, Wash., died Nov. 3, 2009. He practiced medicine in Clarkston, Idaho, for 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Peggy.

Marjorie Anderson Hiltunen, 81, died Dec. 13, 2009. She taught

math in Minnesota schools for 38 years, retiring in 1989.

Stanley M. Johnson, 85, of Owatonna, Minn., died Jan. 14, 2010. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was a Presbyterian minister at churches in Kasota, Crookston, and Owatonna, Minn., retiring in 1989. Mr. Johnson is survived by his wife, **Portia Johanson Johnson '50**, two daughters (including **Andrea Johnson '82**), three sons (including **Daniel Johnson '76** and **Matthew Johnson '89**), daughter-in-law **Ruth Beard Johnson '76**, eight grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and a sister.

Patricia Toole Lampe, 80, of Northfield, Minn., died Oct. 27, 2009. She is survived by her husband, **Robert Lampe '49**, four sons, four grandchildren, and two sisters (including **Barbara Toole Barnes '52**).

Arrlowyan Kaslow Parker, 80, of Friendship Village, Iowa, died Oct. 22, 2009. She was an elementary school art and substitute teacher. Mrs. Parker is survived by a son, two granddaughters, and two sisters.

1951

Joan E. Davis, 81, of Rochester, Minn., died Nov. 22, 2009. She was a retired teacher. Ms. Davis is survived by her twin sister, **Charlotte Davis '51**.

Sally Abrahams Hill, 79, died Dec. 25, 2009. She was a Presbyterian minister and director of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Church Commission from 1981 to 1994. In 1993 she organized the Re-Imagining Conference, an international theological colloquium, and worked for peace and justice throughout her career. A founding member of Feminists of Faith, Mrs. Hill was the first woman to serve as moderator of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area in 1985. She also served as moderator of the Presbytery Council from 1998 to 2002. Macalester presented her with a Distinguished Citizen Award in 1994 and an honorary doctor of divinity degree in 2003. Mrs. Hill is survived by her husband, **Curtis Hill '50**, daughter **Bonnie Hill Eldridge '79**, son **Steven Hill '75**, three grandchildren, and a brother.

Joyce Snyder Kelly, 79, died Nov. 23, 2009, in Blue Earth, Minn. She is survived by two daughters, two sons, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

1952

Joan Meng-Kalleberg, 79, of O'Fallon, Mo., died Dec. 6, 2009. She is survived by a son, a daughter, and six grandchildren.

John Roberson, 83, of Tulsa, Okla., died May 1, 2009. He was a retired home repairman. Mr. Roberson is survived by a daughter, a son, a sister, and three brothers.

Kathleen Lerbakken Stephens, 79, of Overland Park, Kan., died Nov. 29, 2009. She is survived by her husband, Bud, three daughters, and two granddaughters.

Ruth Hanson Vanlandingham, 77, of Basin, Wyo., died March 18, 2008.

Betty Ramsey Young, 79, of Fairfax, Va., died Nov. 22, 2009. She worked as a receptionist in a doctor's office and as a veterinary hospital office manager. Mrs. Young is survived by her husband, **Stanley Young '50**, three daughters, a son, two grandchildren, and a sister.

1954

Mary Jane Davenport Ray, 77, of Sacramento, Calif., died Jan. 26, 2010. During a career of more than 30 years she taught fourth grade and English as a second language. Mrs. Ray is survived by a daughter, a son, two grandchildren, a sister, and a brother.

Walter H. Rommel, 84, of Shoreview, Minn., died Dec. 6, 2009. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and worked for North American Life and Casualty in Minneapolis for 30 years. Mr. Rommel is survived by his wife, Simone, a daughter, a grandson, and a sister.

1955

George D. Dayton, 80, died Nov. 18, 2009. He is survived by two daughters, two sons, 11 grandchildren, and two sisters.

John Lewin, 74, died Sept. 16, 2009, in St. Anthony, Minn. He

worked as an actor at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis for 14 seasons and helped launch the company that would become Brave New Workshop. Mr. Lewin also wrote numerous adaptations of classic plays that were staged at the Guthrie and in New York. He is survived by his wife, Anne Griffin-Lewin.

1958

Robert Wolfson, 73, of St. Paul died Dec. 19, 2009. He worked for LaMaur Inc. for more than 30 years. Mr. Wolfson is survived by his wife, Diane, a daughter, two sons, and five grandchildren.

1959

Jean C. Connell, 85, of St. Petersburg, Fla., died Nov. 18, 2009. She was head of the secondary education department at Macalester. Ms. Connell is survived by her husband, Wally Samanski, two sons, two sisters, and four grandchildren.

Eleanor Orlemann Johnson, 71, died Nov. 12, 2009. She was executive secretary for the Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary. Mrs. Johnson is survived by her husband, Dave, a stepson, and a brother.

Mary James Mead, 71, of Huntley, Ill., died Sept. 28, 2009. She is survived by three sons and two grandchildren.

1960

Paula Pokrandt Berneske, 70, died Aug. 26, 2009. She is survived by a son and a grandson.

James E. Dunphy, 71, of New Prague, Minn., died Dec. 24, 2009. He was a U.S. Army veteran and worked as a buyer for Chart Industries and J&E Enterprises before his retirement in 2004. Mr. Dunphy is survived by his wife, Phyllis, a daughter, a son, three grandchildren, sister **Mary Dunphy Billen '62**, and a brother.

Mary Wright Richardson, 84, of Minneapolis died Nov. 10, 2009. She traveled with the Ice Follies, taught figure skating, and retired after 30 years as a kindergarten teacher. She is survived by two daughters, three granddaughters,

three great-grandchildren, a sister, and a brother.

Stanley B. Roberts, 79, of Howard Lake, Minn., died June 30, 2009. He is survived by his wife, Mazie, three daughters, and four grandsons.

1962

Brenda J. Shock, 69, of Nashwauk, Minn., died Dec. 21, 2009. She served as a flight nurse in the U.S. Air Force and coached the Nashwauk-Keewatin cheerleaders from 1984 to 1994, leading the team to several state championships. Ms. Shock is survived by two daughters, four grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother.

1966

Susan Sheldon Hargrove, 65, of Galveston, Texas, died Oct. 27, 2009. Mrs. Hargrove is survived by her husband, Thomas, two sons, and a grandson.

Maxine Morain Montgomery, 89, died Jan. 8, 2010, in Kirkland,

Wash. She taught elementary school for many years. Mrs. Montgomery is survived by four daughters, 12 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

1968

James J. Martin, 63, of Winona, Minn., died Dec. 1, 2009. He retired as president of La Crosse Milling Co. in 1991. Mr. Martin is survived by his wife, Lynn, a daughter, a son, and five grandchildren.

1971

Stephen L. Alm, 59, of Palm Bay, Fla., died Nov. 11, 2009. He is survived by a sister and a brother.

1980

Lisa Richcreek Nieland, 51, of Rosemount, Minn., died Oct. 23, 2009. She was the proprietor of Mona Lisa's Antiques. Mrs. Nieland is survived by her husband, Paul, and two sisters.

OTHER LOSSES

Nancy Lee Head, of Arlington, Va., widow of past Macalester President Charles Turck, died Jan. 15, 2010. She was 70. Ms. Head was an activist, advocate, educator, and lay minister who focused on social justice and mental health issues. She worked for the Presbyterian Church for 31 years, cofounded and served as president of the D.C. Mental Health Consumers League, and was program coordinator for the Washington, D.C., office of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. The Presbyterian Church presented her with the John Park Lee Award in recognition of her efforts on behalf of the mentally ill. Ms. Head is survived by a brother.

Angela M. McCaffrey, who hosted numerous international Macalester students, died Jan. 27, 2010. She was 60. In 1985, she joined the faculty of Hamline Law School, where she was a clinical professor and director of the school's 10 legal clinics. Mrs. McCaffrey led efforts to reunite Macalester student **Westenley Alcenat '10** with his grandparents and secure U.S. citizenship for him after his father was murdered by soldiers in his native Haiti. Mrs. McCaffrey is survived by her husband, Mark Cosimini, sons **Charles Cosimini '09** and **Michael Cosimini '05**, and four brothers.

The Right Room

BY | PETER BOGNANNI '01

SOMETIMES I THINK THE BEST thing about going to a liberal arts school was that it gave me plenty of time to find out what I *couldn't* do before I finally figured out what I could. It seemed at times like this amazing mind-expanding process-of-elimination exercise, one that lasted four years and somehow left me with a wealth of knowledge about *Citizen Kane*. Of course, there were always some Mac students who could do anything and everything, and I assume they are now quietly running the world.

This wasn't so much the case with me.

I came to Macalester with what were quite possibly the most lopsided SAT scores in the school's history and a single painfully earnest goal: to be an artist of some kind. In retrospect my goal was a little on the vague side, but I went after it with gusto. I first tried acting, something I'd enjoyed in high school. But I gave it up not long after my dazzling debut as a sandwich-munching janitor in a musical (fortunately for the crowd, mine was a non-singing role). I jumped next to the visual arts, only to have my detailed drawing of tennis ball-on-top-of-television met with silence by all in the room. It was not an awed silence.

Creative writing came last, and honestly, I approached it without expecting much. I had always been an enthusiastic reader and I'd done some playwriting in high school, but I had never seen myself as a writer. Maybe it was this lack of experience, this lack of pressure that allowed me to loosen up and learn something. On the first day of class, Professor Wang Ping told us that she had entered her first creative writing class by mistake and decided to stay. I could relate. And I decided to stay in her class.

Soon I was taking real pleasure in crafting sentences, tell-

ing stories, building worlds. In short: I was inspired, and I found myself working on my stories long into the night when I should have been learning about postmodernism. The biggest surprise came when I read my work aloud and people actually seemed to enjoy it. This was a shocking experience, and it stayed with me for a long time.

I eventually went on to graduate school at the Iowa Writers' Workshop and now I've returned to Macalester as a visiting instructor of creative writing. My recently published novel represents the final product of 10 years of continuous practice since my first experience with creative writing.

I wonder sometimes, if I hadn't gone to Macalester and run the gauntlet of the arts, if I would have discovered my love for writing at all. It's hard to say. But now as an instructor, I keep an eye out for those students who seem like they might have wandered into the wrong room.

And I try to convince them to stay. ■

Peter Bognanni '01, whose work has appeared in, among other places, Gulf Coast, The Bellingham Review, and McSweeney's Internet Tendency, was a 2008 Pushcart Nominee. His first novel, The House of Tomorrow (Putnam/Penguin), was published in March. You can find him at peterbognanni.com.



LET US HAVE IT! We are seeking funny, thoughtful, or just downright interesting essays for Grandstand. If you're a Macalester alum, student, faculty member, or staff member with something worthwhile to say in 600 to 800 words, we want to hear from you. Send your essays to llamb@macalester.edu.

Wellness programs
offered: 61

Percentage of students
satisfied with the
Leonard Center: 96

Student-athletes (varsity,
club, and intramural
athletics): 1,206

Donors needed to keep
Mac strong and fit:
All of us

Josh Ortiz '05

Annual Fund supporter
since 2007

Majors: Psychology,
Neuroscience

Hometown: La Junta, Colorado

Profession: Minnesota Twins
Community Programs Coordinator

By supporting the Annual Fund, Josh gives students the opportunity to pursue their passions and learn valuable lessons outside the classroom—on an athletic field, in a laboratory, or studying abroad. Josh's passion for physical fitness was fueled by his experience at Mac playing on the baseball team. He now helps Twin Cities youth stay active through the Twins RBI program.

Your participation matters—support the Annual Fund and be a part of Macalester's bright future.

Every step counts.

macalester.edu/giving



STEP FORWARD

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PHOTOS: AARON BROWN

Macalester's "Mac Stands With Haiti" February benefit concert was organized by the Haiti Relief Task Force, led by Haiti native Westenley Alcenat '10 (far left).