

Macalester co-hosts national Imagining America conference Sept. 22-24

St. Paul, Minn. - Macalester College is co-hosting the 11th annual Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life (<http://imaginingamerica.org/>) (IA), national conference Sept. 22-24 in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The conference will have more than 400 attendees including faculty, administrators, and students from IA colleges and universities across the country, as well as leaders of local and national arts and cultural organizations.

This year's conference theme, "What Sustains Us" will focus on a broad range of questions about sustainability:

environmental concerns (in both campus and community contexts), our existential and vocational condition, our social and institutional relations regarding humanities and arts practices, as well as concerns of globalization and the often-invisible labor that supports us. The conference will provide critical discourse and interactivity on this topic through workshops, seminars, roundtables, poster presentations, live performance, media viewings, and visits to local campus-community partnership sites.

According to Macalester's Civic Engagement Center Associate Director Paul Schadewald, it's noteworthy that local colleges and universities work together. "One of the most significant aspects of the conference is the collaboration among Minnesota colleges and universities that reflects a common commitment to strengthen our shared public culture, to build democratic partnerships between campuses and communities, and to engage student leaders."

During the conference, which is co-hosted by the University of Minnesota's Office for Public Engagement, Macalester's Provost Kathleen Murray and Associate Vice President for Public Engagement Andrew Furco of the University of Minnesota will host a meeting for senior higher education administrators on civic engagement.

Macalester students will participate as Undergraduate Fellows, and 35 faculty and staff members will present their public scholarship and creative practice or participate in conference sessions. Macalester participants include Macalester College Civic Engagement staff members, Geography Prof. Laura Smith, Theatre Prof. Harry Waters Jr., Hispanic Studies Prof. Molly Olsen, Media and Cultural Studies Visiting Assistant Prof. Michael Griffin, History Prof. Peter Rachleff, English Prof. Wang Ping and American Studies Prof. Karin Aguilar-San Juan.

In conjunction with the conference, Macalester College's art gallery is hosting an exhibit, "What Sustains Us?" that features art works from publicly engaged artists and community organizations in the Twin Cities, organized by Macalester Art and Art History Gallery curator Greg Fitz. The works explore how our relationships to one another, to the world, and to the public good are sustained over time. Artists included Carolyn Lee Anderson, Ta-coumba Aiken, Wing Young Huie, Ricardo Levins Morales, Macalester Art Prof. Ruthann Godollei and others who are participating in the conference.

Other member Minnesota IA schools that are involved with the conference are: Augsburg College, Carleton College, Inver Hills Community College, and Winona State University.

IA is a national consortium of 88 colleges and universities whose mission is to animate and strengthen the



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public and civic purposes of humanities, arts and design through mutually beneficial campus-community partnerships that advance democratic scholarship and practice.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 1,985 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism and civic engagement. Learn more at [macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu) (<http://www.macalester.edu/>)

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