Fall 2020

# Macalester Today Fall 2020

Macalester College

MACALESTER

# TODAY

FALL 2020

16

20

34

## FEATURES


### Silver Lining 14
With his third startup, Dale Johnson '69 is salvaging precious metals from outdated technology.

### Confronting History, Panel by Panel 16
In writing about Emmett Till's murder, Karlos K. Hill's graphic novel brings Till to life.

### Meet President Rivera 20
With optimism, energy, and a bioethicist's lens, Macalester's 17th president is leading the college through historic challenges.

### Map to the Future 26
The successful Macalester Moment campaign shaped the student experience, today and for generations to come.

### International Forecast 28
For international college students eager to study in the United States, COVID-19 is just the latest complication.

### Conservation Philosophy 34
Brady Robinson '95 is working to protect and restore the great outdoors.

### Lecture Notes: Cognitive Phenomena 36
How do we learn, remember, and think?

### Equal Harvest 38
Marichel Mejia '11 helps farmworkers fight for fairness.


**ON THE COVER:**
"I have a lot of hope and optimism about the future of our college and our country," says President Suzanne Rivera.

PHOTO: DAVID J. TURNER

LEFT TO RIGHT: PHOTO PROVIDED; DAVID J. TURNER; JULIA VANDENOEVER; RICHARD MIA; KIRA FRIEDMAN

36


38

## DEPARTMENTS

**Correspondence** 2

**Sounding Board** 3

**1600 Grand** 4

The Class of 2024, gallery buzz, and a new buddy system

**Class Notes** 40

**Books** 41

**Weddings** 46

**In Memoriam** 49

**Last Look** 52

46

## STAFF

EDITOR
Rebecca DeJarlais Ortiz '06
dejarlais@macalester.edu

ART DIRECTION
The ESC Plan / theESCplan.com

CLASS NOTES EDITOR
Robert Kerr '92

PHOTOGRAPHER
David J. Turner

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Julie Hessler '85

ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
Julie Hurbanis

MACALESTER

CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Jerry Crawford '71

PRESIDENT
Dr. Suzanne Rivera

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT
D. Andrew Brown

ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENGAGEMENT
Katie Ladas

**MACALESTER TODAY** (Volume 108, Number 4) is published by Macalester College. It is mailed free of charge to alumni and friends of the college four times a year. Circulation is 32,000.

**TO UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS:**
Email: alumnioffice@macalester.edu
Call: 651-696-6295 or 1-888-242-9351
Write: Alumni Engagement Office, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105-1899

**TO SHARE COMMENTS OR IDEAS:**
Email: mactoday@macalester.edu
Phone: 651-696-6123

*Macalester Today* is printed on Rolland Enviro 100, a 100 percent recycled paper. Our printer, Royle Printing of Madison, Wis., is FSC® certified. (FSC® C22017)


## Classroom Education

I am a Class of 2018 alum who was lucky enough to take a class with Professor Duchess Harris in the fall of my senior year. I am currently a high school US history teacher in the suburbs of the Twin Cities. I was so taken when Professor Harris wrote, "students sometimes have a unit on slavery, but they don't get the skill set to talk about race relations" ("The Time to Act Is Now," Summer 2020) as it summed up so much of what I have been trying to incorporate into my curriculum. I was incredibly struck by the timeline that mapped the trajectory of the racial justice movement, with a specific lens toward Minnesota. About two sentences in, I realized that this was something that belonged on the walls of my classroom.

**Sarah Kolenbrander '18**
**St. Paul**

## Painful Discoveries

My dad, Shigeru Ochi '49, is 96 and has always cherished his time at Macalester. I was researching the archives to find out more about his college days; three generations of our family have attended Mac, so this holds an important place in our family.

After our country entered World War II, Dad was sent to Manzanar internment camp because he is of Japanese descent. The October 20, 1944, *Mac Weekly* announced that Dad, a freshman, had been inducted into the Army. Despite having been unjustly imprisoned he was eager to serve his country. On the same page, however, a fellow student in the military wrote, "Am proud to report that my crew has accounted for two Jap planes, and now have two decals decorating my conning tower." He describes a group of desolate islands and says, "One way of punishing the Japs would be to make them live on them!" I was stunned by these words, but since we were at war with Japan this was somewhat understandable. There is no excuse, though, for the next article I found.

After Dad completed his military service, he returned to campus. The March 11, 1949, *Mac Weekly* noted he and two others were to represent Mac in a national math competition. There is also a photo, however, of three students in blackface with a caption that begins, "Hear Them Darkies Singing."

I had been planning on getting these papers enlarged for display but obviously can't do this now. Seeing blatant racism in our college archives hurts but also makes me realize how much has changed over the last 70 years both at Mac and in our society. The recent killing of George Floyd, though, highlights how far we all still have to go.

**James W. Ochi '80**
**San Diego, Calif.**

## History Reflection

Reading about Marcia Zimmerman '81 ("Change in Plans," Summer 2020) reminded me of my family's experience with Temple Israel. Since the 1930s, my mother had been a member of the vocal quartet at Temple Israel. As the persecution of Jews in Germany and the occupied areas became widely known during World War II, some members of the congregation called for her to be released because of her German surname. Rabbi Albert Minda, spiritual leader of the temple since 1922 and a well-respected community leader, refused to fire her, stating that to do so would have made the congregation no better than those who were persecuting Jews. She stayed.

**Karl von Loewe '62**
**Somerset, N.J.**


## Correction

In our summer issue, the timeline in "The Time to Act is Now" incorrectly stated that Philando Castile was shot in the head. He was shot five times, twice in the heart. We regret the error.

## CONNECT WITH US

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

### CORRESPONDENCE POLICY

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

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

# Ever the Same

I have a friend who, upon being confronted with a change, often says, "Same, same. But different." That expression has been rattling around in my head since we reopened the campus to students at the end of August.

In many ways, the start of the fall semester has felt familiar. Eager new students, arriving with parents whose faces registered a mix of travel fatigue, pride, and sadness. Energized faculty and staff, excited to share their knowledge and eager to reconnect with one another. Campus grounds, tended lovingly, displaying a final burst of color to signal the end of summer. Same, same.

But, in other ways that will not come as a surprise to any reader, it also has been the most unusual and challenging fall opening any of us ever has experienced. We have been pushed to our limits, and many in our community have felt overwhelmed by change, by fear, by pressure, and by grief.

We started the fall with fewer students in residence halls and implemented a two-week "quiet period," during which community members underwent COVID testing and limited contact with others. Face coverings, plexiglass shields, stickers indicating six feet of distance, grab-and-go meals, classes delivered by Zoom—all of these and many more adjustments made because of COVID-19 have transformed the campus into something that looks very … different.

All of these changes were made to reduce the risks of virus transmission. And, indeed, the work involved to reimagine virtually every aspect of campus life—in and outside of the classroom—has been an extraordinary undertaking. Even at our lowest moment, when we lost a beloved member of the community, we mourned together while adjusting our familiar rituals to comply with the state's public health mandates. Every change we've made this fall has been with a deep commitment to preserving the aspects of a Macalester education that makes this place so special.

So, what does it mean that we are operating very differently than usual but still delivering a uniquely Mac experience? Here's what the pandemic will not change:


DAVID J. TURNER

**Students will be nurtured.** Macalester provides an intimate living-learning experience that will support students, help them, and encourage their dreams. Despite the pandemic, Macalester provides assistance to address a variety of student needs—from academic advising to help with starting a company. From forming a new club to finding a good therapist. From help with research to assistance creating a study-away experience. Our staff and faculty are here to make sure Mac students get the most out of their education.

**Students will be challenged.** Through exciting coursework, exposure to new ideas, creative co-curricular activities, and opportunities to engage in service, each Mac student will finish the year having stretched and grown in ways none of us can quantify today. These challenges will forge them and help them along the path to figuring out who they will be in the world and what legacies they will create.

**Students will build relationships.** They will bond with hallmates, teammates, classmates, professors, coaches, librarians, advisors, the people who prepare their meals, the groundskeepers, RAs, chaplains, and many others on campus and via Zoom. They will make friends with the members of an orchestra or choir, they will write plays, they will organize protests, they will get jobs, they will fall in love. All the relationships that develop out of these experiences will form each student's particular branch of the Macalester family tree.

**Macalester will have impact.** Macalester is not merely about ideas; it is about action. Everything we study, practice, create, invent, design, innovate, and discover will make important contributions: to our campus, our cities, our country, and our world. That is both a thrilling opportunity and an awesome responsibility.

Yes, the surface elements have been adjusted to keep each other safer. And we may create new traditions that expand what it means to be a Scot. But, in all the respects that really matter, in good times and in hard times, dear old Macalester remains true to its mission. And the lessons we all are learning in this moment—about resilience, tenacity, flexibility, and compassion—will serve our students well as they face the challenges ahead.

Dr. Suzanne Rivera is president of Macalester College.

# 1600 GRAND

PRECIOUS DLAMINI '21

## EARLY-STAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Halfway through her summer internship, Precious Dlamini '21 (Manzini, Kingdom of Eswatini) knows everything there is to know about toilet paper. She's doing data analysis for local startup Bim Bam Boo, an eco-friendly personal hygiene company known best for its tree-free bamboo toilet rolls.

Dlamini is one of 10 students participating in MacNest, a summer program that pairs students with emerging companies in need of interns, then funds the internships. Through Macalester's entrepreneurship office, the students have access to unique mentorship opportunities, often working side by side with the CEOs and upper leadership of up-and-coming organizations.

"I wanted to get an idea of what entrepreneurship was like, because I plan to pursue that path at some point," Dlamini says. "And I wanted experience with data analysis—my latest project is researching toilet paper theft."

While many MacNest participants work with data or cod-

PHOTOS PROVIDED

ALEX THOMAS '22

ing, each student molds their experience to fit their interests. Take Alex Thomas '22 (Kerala, India), a studio art major who had secured a position as a studio assistant for a local arts organization before MacNest ever crossed his mind.

"Then COVID-19 happened," Thomas says. "It's already hard to find funded opportunities in a creative field. I realized that MacNest might be able to help me hold on to the opportunity, since the organization I'm working with is still a startup."

Thomas partnered with Office of Cultural Work, an organization whose mission is to support local artists and small businesses. Much of his work included assisting Seitu Jones, a Minnesota-based artist and muralist known best for his large-scale public artworks.

Since George Floyd's killing by a Minneapolis police officer, that work has been even more significant to the Twin Cities community. Thomas has been an integral part of Jones's *#blues4george* project, in which he and Jones developed a free downloadable stencil of Floyd's face that community members can use to help memorialize his legacy throughout the Twin Cities.

"He looks at pervasive societal issues, highlighting the need for reform in things like food security and criminal justice," Thomas says. "I admire his ability to channel opinions and feelings through an expressive medium and allow people to engage with art and society at the same time. That is a level of engagement I want to tap into in my creative practice as well." **–Rebecca Edwards '21**

DAVID J. TURNER

# TEAM EFFORT

**ATHLETICS**

In a year that will hold many more virtual campus visits and Zoom team meetings than practices and games, head football coach Tony Jennison was thrilled to finally see his 18 first-year football players in person at move-in. "It was awesome," Jennison says. "Everyone was masked up and we were doing things very differently compared to other years, but it was so rewarding to see people on campus, to meet students and their families after so many Zoom meetings."

Macalester's academic year started with a two-week quiet period, but later in the fall, athletic teams were allowed to start non-contact practices, with student-athletes training in small groups, wearing face coverings, and practicing physical distancing. Teams and coaches will focus on strength and conditioning, team values, and leadership skills, with plans to return to competition in 2021.

In the meantime, Jennison and his staff will foster community through video calls and lots of text check-ins. "We want to build the connections that make Mac our students' second home," he says. "There's really no roadmap in a pandemic. We're just trying to navigate it intelligently and safely, with lots of reminders for players to get out of their rooms, get fresh air, wear their masks, and be safe."

# OUTDOOR SCENE

Theater professor and scenic designer Mina Kinukawa isn't used to seeing her work exhibited outside at street level, but that's exactly what happened at two recent Shine a Light multimedia festivals at the Jungle Theater and Theater Mu. The Twin Cities theaters coordinated the free events—featuring window installations and projections—to bring the community together safely during the pandemic. "My piece, 'Anticipation,' is about the communities I've become part of, thanks to theater productions," says Kinukawa, who teaches "Fundamentals of Scenography" and "Advanced Set Design" at Macalester. "Those communities—many in the Twin Cities—were the ones that reached out to me during difficult, uncertain times. They taught me resilience and gave me hope."

## THE CLASS OF 2024

**547**
CLASS SIZE

**54**
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED, BY CITIZENSHIP

**44**
NUMBER OF STATES REPRESENTED

MINNESOTA, CALIFORNIA, ILLINOIS
TOP-REPRESENTED STATES

**36**
LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

**41**
PERCENTAGE OF U.S. STUDENTS WHO ARE STUDENTS OF COLOR

**18**
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY AS FIRST-GEN

**2003**
BIRTH YEAR OF YOUNGEST STUDENT

**ALEX**
**ANNA**
**EMMA**
MOST COMMON FIRST NAMES

**CHEN**
**WANG**
**NGUYEN**
MOST COMMON LAST NAMES

DAVID J. TURNER

# A FORCE FOR GOOD

**When the pandemic forced the cancellation of many summer opportunities for students like internships, research opportunities, and volunteer positions, Mac Project Corps came to life.**

A collaboration of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, The Olin-Rice Hub, Career Exploration, and Alumni Engagement, the Mac Project Corps program placed 28 students (seven teams of four students each) as virtual consultants tackling problems at Twin Cities businesses, nonprofits, and startups during July. "Students jumped right into this, even though they didn't know what it would be like," says Liz Jansen, biology professor and Olin-Rice Hub director.

Bruno Stojcic '21 (Bosnia-Herzegovina), a biology and German studies major, and team members worked with OneOme, a biotech startup co-founded by the Mayo Clinic. They conducted market research and helped the company improve its educational platform to train medical providers. "I learned that it's really important to look at the same problem from many different perspectives, and to take those perspectives into consideration before making a conclusion," he says.

Other projects included building resiliency among St. Paul restaurants during the pandemic; creating pop-up shops for BIPOC entrepreneurs; transforming a popular African cultural festival from an in-person to a virtual celebration; providing recommendations to better serve the Somali community during the pandemic, and helping Macalester's own Sustainability Office to develop a sustainable dining plan under new COVID-19 guidelines.

Debbie Sun '21 (Beijing), Chihiro Aita '21 (Kamakura, Japan), Kate Seeger '22 (Eugene, Ore.), and Zoe Kross '22 (Queen Creek, Ariz.) worked with HiBAR, a local eco-friendly brand that makes plastic-free, salon-quality shampoos and conditioners.

HiBAR asked the student team to look at substitutes for palm oil use when making glycerin—a vital part of hair product production—as well as find ways to reduce waste on HiBAR's production line. Because palm oil production leads to deforestation, global warming, and decreased biodiversity, the startup has been eager to explore alternatives.

The team researched alternatives (coconut oil is one possibility), found potential suppliers, and conducted a competitive analysis regarding overall costs, the environmental and financial costs of transporting the product, and existing sustainability practices of various suppliers. "I was super impressed with the team," says eco-entrepreneur and HiBAR co-founder Nora Schaper. "They asked excellent questions and they found answers and details on ingredients that I didn't even know worked really well together, with very little help from us."

The team also found a way to upcycle the plastic barrels generated by HiBAR's production line. Several local farms will take regular delivery of the barrels for composting, rain collection, planters, and more.

"None of us are environmental science majors," says Kross, "but I think that was probably the best part about it. We all came from different backgrounds with our majors and we were able to collaborate and bring fresh new perspectives for every problem that we were given throughout this process."

In addition to working with organizations, teams worked with faculty advisors and connected with alumni guest experts who provided guidance along the way. Each student received a $500 stipend.

"Mac Project Corps provided a glimmer of light during difficult times," says Kate Ryan Reiling '00, director of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.


DAVID J. TURNER

**"WE ALL CAME FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS WITH OUR MAJORS AND WE WERE ABLE TO COLLABORATE AND BRING FRESH NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR EVERY PROBLEM THAT WE WERE GIVEN THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS."**

**-ZOE KROSS '22**

1600 GRAND

# SECOND SYLLABUS

**Learn about a few classes happening this fall—in the words of the faculty who teach them.**

## "Prius or Pickup? Political Divides and Social Class"

**Department: Sociology**

Professor Khaldoun Samman

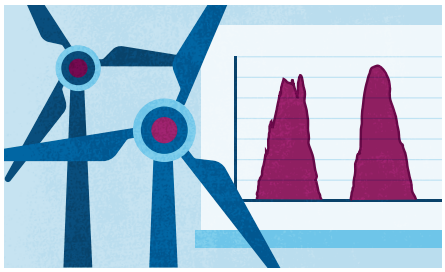
### Why take this class?

Because it will allow you to become a constructive political actor by providing you with interesting academic tools to understand our weird political times. Often, too many of us give up on a large sector of the population thinking that they are lost to irrational forces. But what if we change our approach and begin to think of them and us as possible allies? What would that approach look like? These are political questions but they are also deeply academic and intellectual.

We'll observe the far right "theater of politics" to understand how liberals have left working-class culture behind in ways that allowed the far right to fill the void (country music, religion, church) and articulate a political voice that some working-class folks, especially whites, may find appealing. We'll look closely at how the far right was able to do this and, by creative means, search for ways in which a populist left may emerge.

**Selected texts and films:** *People Like Us: Social Class in America*, produced by ITVS; selections from *Fox Populism: Branding Conservatism as Working Class* by Reece Peck; selections from *Rednecks, Queers, and Country Music* by Nadine Hubbs

**Fun fact:** A group performance consisting of three to five students performing a piece together is part of your grade. Performances can include anything from a political campaign speech to a play, debate, or song (your own or a carefully selected pre-recording).



## "Applied Multivariable Calculus I: The Calculus of Sustainability"

**Department: Math, Statistics, and Computer Science**

Professor Lori Ziegelmeier

### Why take this class?

We adopt a mathematical framework to better understand sustainability questions like these:

- What percentage of the United States could be covered by solar panels to produce all of the country's electricity needs?
- Under optimal conditions, how much power can a wind turbine of a certain radius produce?
- How can the population of wolves in Northern Minnesota be modeled?

As a student applied mathematician, you'll come to view mathematics not as a system of formulas to be memorized and manipulated, but as a flexible and powerful toolbox of ideas that can help solve real problems in diverse disciplinary fields including environmental science, biology, economics, geoscience, physics, chemistry, medicine, and more.

**Prerequisites:** Basic high school math (through algebra and trigonometry) is required. But even if you have extensive experience with calculus (including Advanced Placement or similar), you may find new and challenging material in this course because of its emphasis on applications, modeling, computation, and multivariate models.

**Selected texts:** *Applied Calculus*, 5th edition by Hughes-Hallett, et al; *Start R in Calculus* by Daniel Kaplan

**Pro tip:** Think and act like a scientist: Ask questions relentlessly until you understand.


## "African American Literature, 1900-Present"

**Department: English**

Professor Daylanne English

### Why take this class?

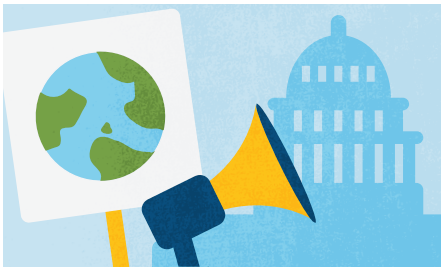
Simply because there is no more important course that you can take at this moment. In the wake of the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the worldwide protests that have followed, we must not just carry signs that proclaim that "Black Lives Matter," we must center Black lives and Black art, including by reading and studying African American literature.

"This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal. I know the world is bruised and bleeding, and though it is important not to ignore its pain, it is also critical to refuse to succumb to its malevolence." –Toni Morrison

In keeping with Morrison's command, in this course we will "do language," in a shared project of analyzing, appreciating, learning from, and writing about literary works by African American artists.

**Selected genres and authors:** Essays, jazz poetry, prose poems, short stories, and novels, including works by W. E. B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, Toni Morrison, Octavia Butler, and Danez Smith

**Past and present:** We will dedicate class time each week to studying connections between our texts and contemporary political and social events and contexts, including protests and pandemic. We will also include time for reflection.



## "Ecology and the Environment"

**Departments: Biology and Environmental Studies**

Professor Mary Heskel
and Professor Christine O'Connell

### Why take this class?

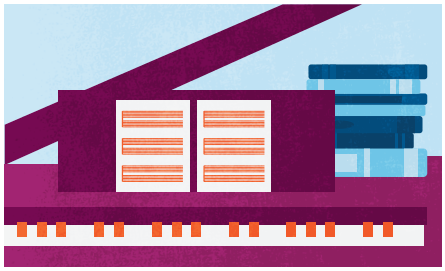
In the 21st century, ecosystems are already experiencing the impacts of climate change. In this class, we explore these impacts on different scales of life and what this means for humans, non-human species, and ecosystems all over the world.

We'll examine ecology through four conceptual "lenses"—climate change, environmental justice, land use, and ecosystem services—to gain critical insight into how scientists, policymakers, land managers, organizers, and other stakeholders evaluate complex ecological and environmental systems.

**Pro tip:** Science requires a balance of courage and humility—this is as true for undergraduates as it is for researchers at leading institutions. It's a process of realizing you don't have all the answers, seeking information from other sources, and developing new questions to build on existing experience.

**Fun fact:** Plants are made from air!

**Fun fact 2:** Agriculture covers approximately 40 percent of the Earth's terrestrial ice-free surface, making it the most extensive way that humans have altered the face of our planet.



## "Musical Fictions"

**Departments: Music and English**

Professor Mark Mazullo

### Why take this class?

From E. M. Forster's Lucy Honeychurch, who "entered into a more solid world when she opened the piano," to James Baldwin's Sonny, who "moved in an atmosphere which wasn't like theirs at all," fictional musicians encounter trouble when negotiating the conflicting realms of art and society. Experts in one kind of expression, they fail in others. What draws these characters to music? What does it offer them? What is its value to us? We will read works of literature by diverse authors, discuss them in terms of the musical contexts that inform and inspire them, and write about them from critical perspectives.

**Selected texts:** *Jazz* by Toni Morrison; *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan; *The Song of the Lark* by Willa Cather; "Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin

**Fun fact:** Assignments include readings as well as listening to musical selections featured in, or affiliated with, the readings.


**Part of the Class of 2020's online senior thesis exhibition DISLOCATE, Ema Erikson's *Four Rocks* integrates a community of moss and lichen onto large-scale drawings of coupled figures drawn to resemble the basalt boulders of the Columbia River Gorge.**

**Top: Installation view of Nicholas Galanin's *Everything We've Ever Been, Everything We Are Right Now***

# GALLERY BUZZ

This summer, *City Pages* named Macalester's Law Warschaw Gallery 2020's best local gallery. In the words of the Twin Cities alt-weekly: "Jehra Patrick has brought an exciting mix of art to Law Warschaw ever since her appointment in 2016 as curator and gallery director. Recent exhibitions have been smart and provocative, touching on many crucial conversations happening across the country."

In addition to hosting the annual senior thesis exhibition, the Law Warschaw Gallery—part of the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center—hosts two to three group and solo exhibitions each year from local, national, and international artists. Recently, the gallery has been home to *Rituals of Regard and Recollection*, a selection of works on paper in response to author bell hooks's *Belonging: A Culture of Place*; and *Everything We've Ever Been, Everything We Are Right Now*, a diverse media installation from Nicholas Galanin that aimed to "disrupt outside definitions, limitations, and representations of Indigenous culture, while illuminating and celebrating the value of Indigenous knowledge, aesthetics, and continuum."

Those choices are part of Patrick's overarching goal to develop an exhibition program that centers visiting artists and complements Macalester's mission to support multiculturalism, internationalism, and service to society. "By presenting artists who emphasize these values, our exhibitions are relevant not only to multiple areas of academic study on campus, but also draw stronger connections to the broader Twin Cities community and national and international art currents," Patrick says. **–Rebecca Edwards '21**

FROM TOP: CHRISTOPHER SELLECK; EMA ERIKSON

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

**Professor Mario Solis-Garcia** *teaches macroeconomics and researches the connection between government policy and private sector reactions.*

### Any standout books you've read recently?

I'm hooked on Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*, which wasn't on my radar until three of my students referenced it in essays. The book explores how we presume that some people are just born with a skill—but success is actually more about hard work, discipline, and luck.

### What's one of your all-time favorite reads?

I read anything that José Saramago writes, but my all-time favorite is *All the Names*. It's magical realism. I read it in Spanish—maybe someday I'll learn Portuguese so I can read the original.

### What book is crucial to understanding your academic niche?

*Recursive Methods in Economic Dynamics*, by Nancy Stokey, Robert Lucas, Jr., and Edward Prescott. We joke, though, that the authors are the only three people in the world who know exactly what's going on in that book. I require Karthik Athreya's *Big Ideas in Macroeconomics* for intermediate macro. When students come into this class, I need to rewire their brains for this framework. It's a shock, and this book helps.

### Any guilty-pleasure reads?

I've been going down the rabbit hole about the "science" behind biohacking. Right now it's David Perlmutter's *Grain Brain*, about how carbs affect brain health through the gut. There are so many extremes: one writer advocated eating a half-pound of liver every other night. I'm just trying to find common themes about how we can tinker with this machine that we're running. When it's midnight and I'm reading before turning out the light, that's what I enjoy.

DAVID J. TURNER

### What one book would you recommend to everyone at Macalester?

*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, by Carol Dweck. Like *Outliers*, it's about dropping assumptions about what we can and can't do. Students come to me saying they're afraid of math, and that's the fixed mindset: if you think you can't do it, then you can't. If you just keep working, you'll reap the benefits. That's the growth mindset. Since reading it, I'm more open to trying things—and sometimes I surprise myself.

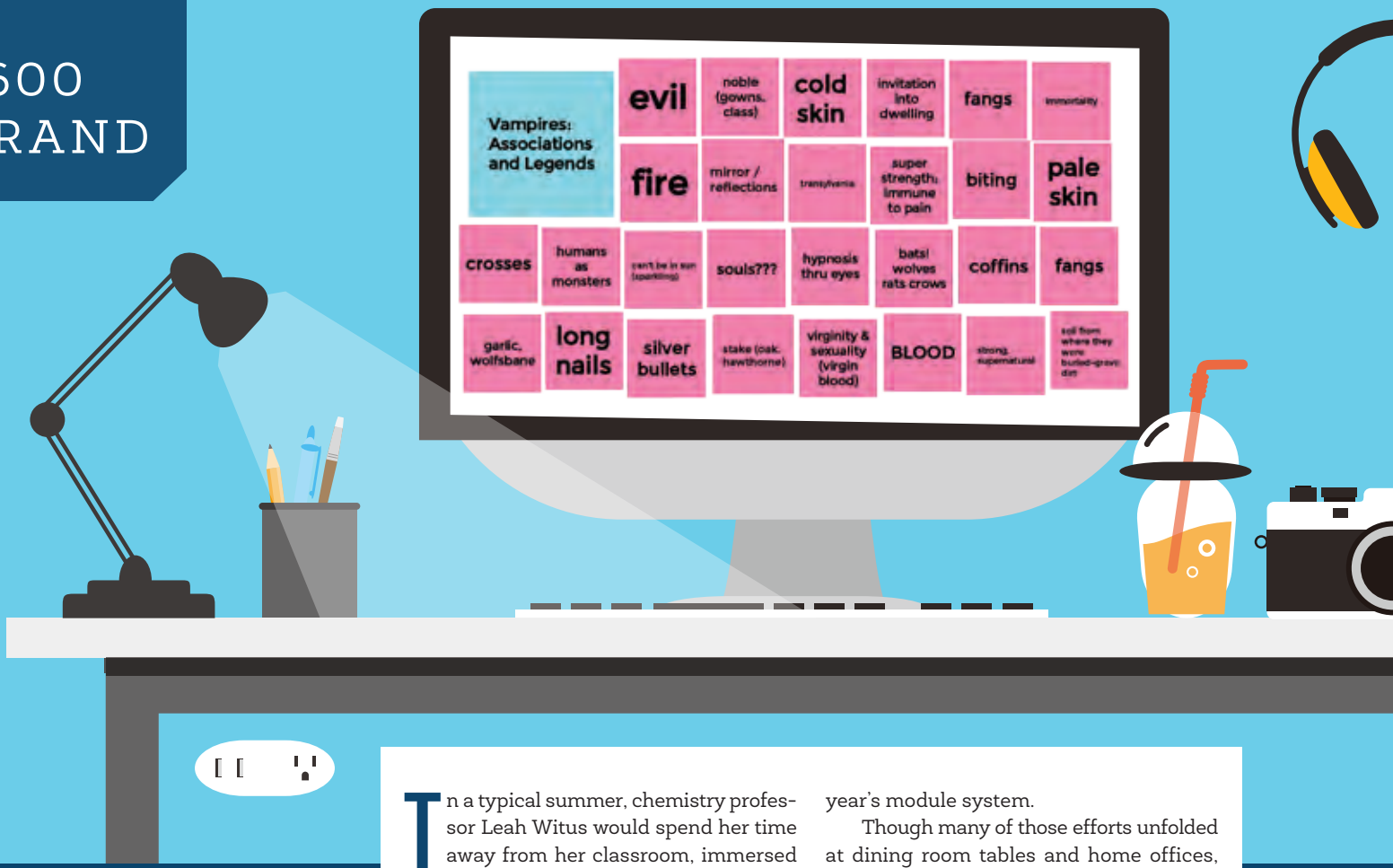
*Whose shelf should we visit next?* **Email mactoday@macalester.edu.**

# ELECTION 2020

It's been a tumultuous, contentious road leading up to Election Day on November 3. We want to hear your reflections: How did your views change during this election cycle? What mattered to you when you mailed in your ballot; what will be on your mind when you head to the polls? If you joined a campaign or ran for office yourself, what will you remember from 2020? Tell us: mactoday@macalester.edu or #heymac. We'll share stories in our winter issue.

**"CREATE COMMUNITY ON ELECTION DAY: GATHER SAFELY WITH OTHERS (IN PERSON OR ONLINE) TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE AND MAKE MEANING OF THE ELECTION. VOTING IS NOT JUST AN INDIVIDUAL ACTION. PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO VOTE WHEN THEY ARE CONNECTED TO OTHERS."**

**–PAUL SCHADEWALD,**
**SENIOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP**




# REIMAGINING THE CLASSROOM

In a typical summer, chemistry professor Leah Witus would spend her time away from her classroom, immersed in her lab with student research assistants, making and studying peptides that catalyze chemical reactions. This year, though, she worked her way through her syllabi and created a series of prerecorded videos that she'll use to supplement her teaching this fall. It was no small task, compounded by having two young kids at home with no daycare available, but Witus expects the work will pay off, in any form her classroom takes this year.

"I've been able to reimagine almost every aspect of the course to optimize student learning," Witus says, adding that she's able to enhance her explanations in the video with animated illustrations and molecular modeling software. "Since the prerecorded video lectures will be available asynchronously, we'll use our synchronous class time (whether in person or via Zoom) for problem-solving tutorials and group question and answer sessions. I've never put more thought into crafting the optimal explanation for every concept than I am right now in preparing for hybrid teaching."

For Mac faculty and staff, it was a summer of intense reflection and preparation for various fall scenarios. They applied lessons from what worked and what didn't last spring, overhauling course plans for both hybrid instruction and this year's module system.

Though many of those efforts unfolded at dining room tables and home offices, they weren't without support from their colleagues. This spring, the college's Academic Technology Services team tested a variety of technology resources, thinking beyond simply equipping classrooms with new tech. "Putting cameras and microphones in classrooms isn't a long-term benefit," says Jenn Haas, associate vice president for Information Technology Services. "As we began planning, it became increasingly clear how much creativity could be facilitated by the tools and how valuable our faculty would find them in every aspect of their work, including research."

The solution the team landed on: building a base technology kit to distribute to every faculty member that includes a Brio webcam, an iPad, an Apple pencil, and a tripod. The kit was created because of COVID, but its resources will extend far beyond the pandemic. "By providing more tools and training for faculty to create digital projects, this opens up a lot of potential," Haas says. "There's no limit to what they can do with it."

Thanks to those kits, art faculty created livestream studios for demos, using head-mounted GoPros to help illustrate techniques. In dance, wireless microphone headsets allow faculty to play music, move around the studio, and still speak

over the audio during live and recorded classes. Professors are even able to replicate a communal whiteboard environment through apps like Jamboard, OneNote, and Padlet.

That's what German studies professor Britt Abel is doing for her "Vampires: From Monsters to Superheroes" class. "I used to take photos of my whiteboard when my class had done a lot of work gathering notes and questions, but now it's easier to keep a record of this kind of work by using Padlet or Jamboard," she says. "On the first day of class, for example, my students brainstormed associations and legends about vampires and recorded them together on a Jamboard page. And now that my students are writing papers, it's easy for them to refer back to the document for ideas and inspiration."

Professors' preparation isn't limited to overhauling how to present content. They're thinking deeply and strategically about carving out space online for seemingly small yet pivotal moments: the unplanned conversations that unfold when everyone is packing up, or the student who shows up a few minutes early because they need to talk. Building community online is crucial, especially in a fall when physical distancing limits students in how and where they can gather.

"I've worked with a bunch of new tools, but I've spent as much time this summer learning about the research about the pedagogy of trauma, and the emotional and psychological challenges of teaching and learning online," classics professor Beth Severy-Hoven says. "And what kinds of class activities will still allow students to communicate with each other and work together? They need structured communication with each other on a whole different level than before. We need to think about our classes in a different way."

It's a big challenge, says her colleague, classics professor Andy Overman, and while this fall won't replace what departments can achieve in person, there's new opportunity, too. "If this had happened 15 years ago, we would've been in a really tough spot: my fax machine wasn't going to get it done," Overman says. "But this technology came along at the right time. To see people respond to this challenge and find ways to use this technology, to make texts and places and important historical moments come alive, has been pretty amazing."

FROM LEFT: ISTOCK; PHOTO PROVIDED

# BUDDY UP

This fall, students, faculty, and staff are all watching for ways to create community in physical distancing. Among the new initiatives: the Buddy System, created by Elika Somani '22 (left) and Elisabeth Landgren '22 with support from Health Promotion students Johanna Caskey '22 and Brooke Offenhauser '21. Co-sponsored by the Laurie Hamre Center for Health and Wellness, the Buddy System will pair students for guided conversations and organic connection. We asked Somani (Singapore) and Landgren (Rockville, Md.) for more details.

**ELIKA**

**We love the community we've grown here and have lots of different friend groups. But being online makes it challenging to meet new people.**

**ELISABETH**

**We thought it would be really nice if we could somehow be partnered with someone we didn't know. Then we said, "Well, maybe we could just start something."**

**ELIKA**

**I'm part of the Civic Engagement Center's Embody The Change circles, where students, faculty, and staff gather in small reflection groups for the semester or longer and talk through discussion prompts. I've loved having this dedicated space for connection, so I wanted to reflect that concept in pairs.**

**ELISABETH**

**We reached out to the Hamre Center, Disability Services, and the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life to see what they're planning. We landed on Health Promotion, which has some similar peer groups and could provide resources and support.**

**ELIKA**

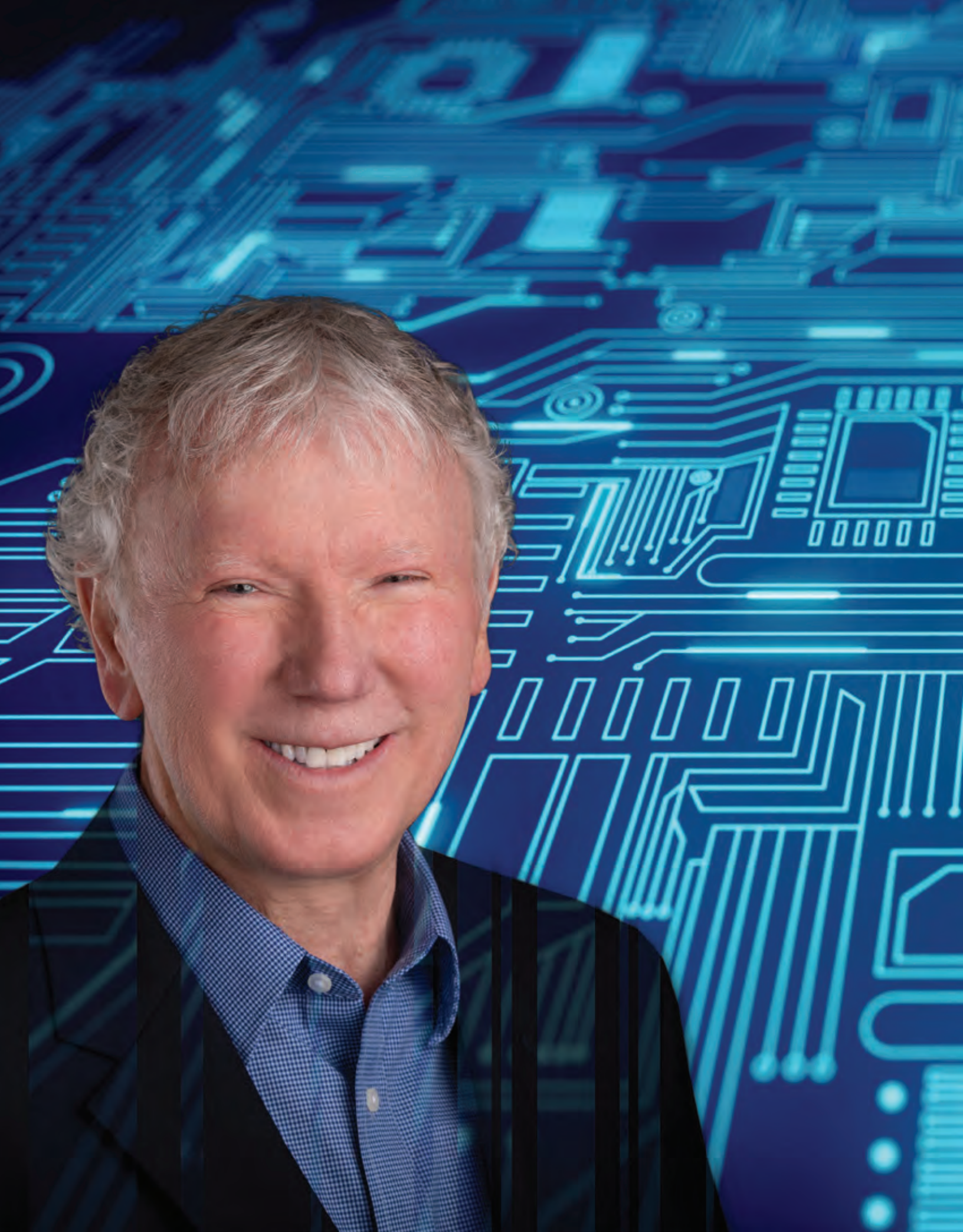
**We're going to provide conversation topics, but our hope is that it becomes organic: here's a random person you don't know—just chat! If you don't like each other, fine. Maybe you'll become best friends. Maybe it'll feel just really nice to have someone new to talk to.**

**ELISABETH**

**So far 100 people have signed up, divided fairly evenly among the class years. After the first module, we'll seek feedback about whether people want more or less structure, then we hope to continue it in the second module and onward.**

**ELIKA**

**If one person gets something really good out of it, then it'll be a success.**



# SILVER LINING

*With his third startup, this alum is salvaging precious metals from outdated technology.*

BY JULIE KENDRICK

To truly appreciate the life and career of Dale Johnson '69, it might help to brush up on your knowledge of the ancient practice of alchemy, especially the part about turning "base" metals into "noble" ones. While those long-ago alchemists never succeeded in their quest, Johnson's Greene Lyon Group, Inc., where he's president and CEO, is currently succeeding in a feat that surely would be applauded by famous alchemists like Robert Boyle and Sir Isaac Newton. The Boston-based startup is revolutionizing the precious metals recycling business with innovative technology that provides a cheaper, faster, and more environmentally friendly way to recover precious metals from base metal scrap.

To acknowledge how he's reclaiming precious metals in entirely new ways, Johnson named his company after an early English poem about alchemy, "The Hunting of the Greene Lyon." "Many people know about alchemists wanting to turn cheap metals like lead into gold," Johnson says. "But they also sought an elixir of immortality, and we do both for our target scrap. Metals like copper are never degraded by recycling, so by separating silver and copper from silver-coated copper wire, the low-value scrap becomes high-value silver plus copper that can be used over and over. We like to say: 'It's not actually alchemy, but it might as well be.'"

Johnson's career has experienced an alchemy of its own. The high-stakes world of startups, technology, and precious metals weren't a part of the first two decades of his career. After growing up in Mankato, Minnesota, he was attracted to Macalester's diversity and international scope. A member of the school's first group to study abroad at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, he went on to become an attorney, representing high-net-worth individuals investing in the U.S. and domestic firms doing business overseas. In those years, Johnson was a relentless road warrior: "On one business trip, I went all the way around the world in a matter of days, traveling to Hong Kong, Singapore, Valencia, London, and then back home to Boston," he says.

A pivotal request from a client is what transformed the globe-trotting attorney into a hard-charging startup entrepreneur. "One of my clients came to me with an electronics industry startup, Manufacturers' Services Ltd. (MSL)," he explained. Johnson began as the firm's legal counsel, but says that "when it became too expensive to pay me by the hour, they hired me, but they insisted I had to be an executive, not just a lawyer."

MSL went public in 2000, with revenues of nearly $2 billion. After that, Johnson worked for a year at a venture capital firm. "It was the combination of those two experiences that helped me realize the difference between giving objective legal advice as a lawyer and making business decisions that would be affecting others' lives as an entrepreneur," he says. "I found that I liked the edginess, the accountability, and the rewards of being an entrepreneur."

It was not, he admits, a life without a new set of worries: "I often was up at 4 a.m., wondering what I'd gotten my family and myself into by leaving a relatively safe legal career. When I look back at that time, I think of that quote by Kobi Yamada, 'Sometimes you just have to take the leap and build your wings on the way down.' That's pretty much what I was doing."

After making one leap, Johnson tried another, going on to cofound MaSeR Corporation, which mechanized a process to recycle electronics. As he was building that business, he learned that circuit boards averaged only about 5 percent of a product's weight, but they represented 98 percent of its value. Determined to find a way to reclaim precious metals like silver, gold, and palladium, he founded Greene Lyon Group in 2007. The company subsequently developed and sold a circuit board-recycling technology focused on a big problem: Each year, Johnson explains, more than 900 million pounds of copper scrap with a thin layer of plated silver is recycled simply as contaminated copper, because there has been no efficient process for separating the silver and copper, even though the silver value is in excess of $1 billion. "It's an economically significant market that previously has gone largely unaddressed," he says.

This fall, Greene Lyon is launching silver/copper recovery operations at its Ohio site. "When metals have to be mined, it's time-consuming, expensive, and not good for the environment," he says. "What we're doing now is being described as 'urban mining.' It has the potential to make a positive impact on the environment, and that matters very much to me." Even so, it may be time for him to call it quits on creating new startups: "This is my third company, and I've promised my wife, Gail, that it's my last," Johnson says. M

Julie Kendrick is a Minneapolis-based writer whose work appears in HuffPost, *Delta Sky*, and the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*.
@KendrickWorks

# CONFRONTING HISTORY

## PANEL BY PANEL

*In writing about Emmett Till's murder, Karlos K. Hill's graphic novel brings Till to life.*

BY TINBETE ERMYAS '08
ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID DODSON

He went by Bobo: a jokester prone to pranks and charmed by life in the Mississippi Delta—the countryside, extended family, and the stately homes of Greenwood. In the photographs that would immortalize him, you see semblances of a baby face: wide eyes, chubby cheeks, and a kind smile. The brutal violence he'd experience belies what we all know but rarely confront: Emmett Till was a kid. And he was killed for doing what kids do—testing the bounds of what's considered appropriate.

These are among the things we come to terms with in *The Murder of Emmett Till*, a graphic novel by Karlos K. Hill '02, historian and Black studies professor at the University of Oklahoma. It tells the story of Till, who at the age of 14 was killed in 1955 after allegedly whistling at a white woman. For years, Hill has focused his scholarship and activism on understanding America's history of racial violence.

It's a calling he felt while at Macalester. "I became a historian because of three professors: James Stewart's lectures were some of the most interesting and energetic I've ever witnessed. When I think of great teaching, I think of him. Mahmoud El-Kati helped me understand the importance of African American history and social justice. And Peter Rachleff is the reason I got into graduate school," Hill says. "I would not be where I am without those three. They still shape me today."

Hill developed his focus on racial violence in graduate school, which stemmed, in part, from the visual. "I began doing archival research and became bowled over by the stories of lynching, the photographs of lynching, and just became intrigued with this aspect of American history that, for the most part, there's very little public consciousness around. I just remember being so emotionally disturbed and distraught doing the research."

Given this background, Hill treats the subject of lynching with both delicacy and rigor. He did the work, and it shows. Hill's first book, *Beyond the Rope: The Impact of Lynching on Black Culture and Memory*, explores a concept he calls the lynched Black body. It's a way of understanding how representations of lynched Black people were used to achieve social and political ends—like advocating for anti-lynching laws. "Till's case is an example of the lynched Black body and how it got deployed," he says.


LSA
21
BEYOND
THE ROPE
KARLOS K. HILL

And yet, *The Murder of Emmett Till* is different from most academic treatments of lynching. Much of that difference is the medium itself. Depicting such a brutal attack in the form of a graphic novel is a tall order, but one Hill was committed to getting right: "I could have just referenced lynching in the text, but graphic history is about telling the story with images in a way that if you remove the text, people can still understand what's happening."

Part of that depiction was breathing life into a person who history remembers as a victim. Hill worked hard to jettison that tendency: Chief among the decisions he made was to use Till's nickname—Bobo—granting him the very thing he'd be deprived of, a childhood filled with curiosity and mistakes.

In the panels, we see a boy who loved the big city but relished aspects of country life, even at his own peril. At one point in the novel, Till shoots firecrackers in public, to the chagrin of his Southern relatives. I held my breath, knowing the price he could pay for causing a ruckus. Even though I know how Till's story ends, I cared for *Bobo*, and didn't want *this* to be the thing that cost him his life. Mistakes are pricey in the Jim Crow south, even for kids.

Implicit in Hill reconstructing Till's life is an understanding that history is as much a series of facts as it is actions. People *did* things—and so part of the challenge is imagining how to honor what the historical record doesn't always depict: "When I'm creating this narrative, I'm acting it out. I'm in my office imagining conversations between [Till's mother] Mamie and Bobo based on the historical record, saying the words that are written down in the narrative."

Till's horrific murder presented another challenge: "We know that [Till] was subjected to a terrible beating, but we don't actually know what happened, so I wanted to be restrained there for those reasons. We imagined this book being read in high school and college classes. I wanted those particular audiences to understand that he was beaten, but I didn't want to sensationalize the violence."

Which brings us to the Till tragedy's central paradox: His body was never meant to be seen, in large part because the country had moved on from the public spectacles lynchings once were, according to Hill: "Southerners understood that the system of segregation is vulnerable to attack. And they understood that wanton acts of violence, public spectacles only bring undue attention to this system and make it more vulnerable."

To that end, Till's terribly bludgeoned body had become a weapon of sorts. In the novel, we see Mamie come to terms with his murder and her eventual indignation, which led to the devastating and radical decision to open her son's casket, exposing the disfigurement. *Look at what they did.*

"Mamie Till's decision to let the world see what they did to her boy was not just a courageous act. It turned on its head the ways in which photographs of lynched or murdered Black bodies had been used previously," Hill says. "What Mamie did was say, 'Okay, I'm going to take something that you want to be secret and make that public.'"



FROM LEFT: PHOTO PROVIDED, OXFORD PRESS


## The Murder of Emmett Till: A Graphic History

**by Karlos K. Hill '02 and David Dodson**

*Oxford University Press*

The parallels between this book and the current moment aren't lost on Hill. This summer was also all about the visual: the most urgent filmmaking being done was by people with smartphones, witnessing things that were once kept hidden. Acts of violence compelling us to look at ourselves.

The visual—and what it can do to people—is still top of mind for Hill, whose courses often include units on lynching. He's concerned with how young people, especially students of color, might consume these images, so he offers a teaching guide in the novel on how to talk with young people about lynching.

But even Hill is still learning. When we spoke, there was an urgency in his voice when discussing what it means to teach racial violence today. "Students can feel anguish when seeing lynchings or brutality against Black bodies. They can shut down intellectually if they're not given a chance to process what they're feeling," he says. "That needs to be at the forefront of the class. And so when I teach the history of lynching again, I won't teach it the same. It's going to be completely different for those reasons."

The utility of these lessons is more important than ever, Hill suggests, especially given the spate of Black people killed in recent years. Where there is a potential for trauma, there's also potential for care. And that has to matter, too. It won't be easy, but looking away isn't an option. M

Tinbete Ermyas '08 is an editor at National Public Radio in Washington, D.C.

# With optimism, energy, and a bioethicist's lens, Macalester's 17th president is leading the college through historic challenges.

BY REBECCA DEJARLAIS ORTIZ '06
PHOTOS BY DAVID J. TURNER

# MEET
# President Rivera

When Dr. Suzanne Rivera was named Macalester's 17th president in January, she knew she wouldn't shed her bioethicist training in her new role, but didn't expect to employ that perspective directly and daily. And yet on an August morning, she's drinking coffee in a *Schitt's Creek* mug on her front porch, reflecting energetically on the principle of non-maleficence.

It's a concept that comes up more in health care and tech settings than in conversations with college presidents, but you'll recognize it in practice: It describes the process of facing and evaluating two or more less-than-ideal choices, with a goal of minimizing harm and maximizing benefit. As Rivera pointed out in a Zoom town hall for alumni in July, the COVID-19 pandemic has turned all of us into bioethicists as we weigh decisions and risks about work, school, travel, and interactions with family and friends.

Back in January, the Macalester community expected 2020 to represent a historic new chapter: Rivera is the first woman and first Latinx person in the college's history to serve as president. Quickly, though, the year also took on historic challenges, on campus and worldwide.

As COVID-19 concerns accelerated in March, Rivera—still serving then as Case Western Reserve University's vice president for research and technology management—moved her graduate-level research ethics seminar to remote instruction. She canceled visits to Macalester this spring but joined daily senior-staff Zoom meetings beginning in April—a divergence from a typical presidential transition plan but a crucial chance to start building relationships and delve into pandemic-related decisions. Her first day as Macalester's president was June 1, a week after George Floyd's killing by a Minneapolis police officer ignited a global uprising.

Instead of gathering for community meet-and-greets and building trust gradually and face-to-face, Rivera is leading the college through a pandemic and a civil rights crisis. In her first week, she received messages from hundreds of alumni asking Macalester to take a stronger stand against structural racism. She began launching early steps in her plans for elevated racial justice work on campus, while constructing plans for a safer return for students in the fall.

Rivera's senior staff team has continued meeting nearly every weekday, with discussions sometimes extending into the weekends. "None of us has felt like we could completely disconnect, because the work is moving at such a velocity that even a day or two makes a big difference in terms of our need to make decisions," she says.

She moved into the President's House in July with her husband, Michael Householder, an American literature scholar. The two met as undergrads at Brown University—more on that later—and have two adult children: their son is out of college, but their 20-year-old daughter is navigating her own university's plans and pivots.

On Sunday mornings, Rivera goes for a run around the neighborhood, as much to ground herself for the week ahead as for fitness. She snaps a picture on campus and gives a Twitter shoutout to the music she's listening to that day: in August, the playlist featured Beyoncé, Celia Cruz, the *Hamilton* soundtrack, Stevie Wonder, and Bill Withers.

Other than that, the summer held little routine as she acclimated to her new role and new home. "The one thing I can rely on is that each day will present challenges that are different than the ones I thought I'd face that day," she says. "I knew this was going to be a big job when it was offered to me in January, but I had no idea how big it would actually become."

Rivera sat down for her first *Macalester Today* interview a few days after she announced the college's decision to scale back its initial reopening plans, limiting on-campus housing for at least the first part of the semester to primarily new first-year students, international students with housing contracts, and students who petitioned to reside on campus.

It's an immense series of challenges, in a season filled with anxiety and fear and uncertainty, and Rivera does not take it lightly. With COVID-19 case counts and trends evolving in Minnesota and nationwide, she knows the difficult decisions are not over. Every message she sends to the Mac community emphasizes the need to be flexible and responsive. Rivera will continue to draw on the principle of non-maleficence, driven by an abiding commitment to keeping her community safe and creating a stronger, brighter future in which everyone can thrive. Ask her what brings her hope, and we could dedicate another interview to all of the topics she lists. "I could go on and on," she says.

We asked President Rivera about some of the experiences that shaped her path and perspective—and what inspires her in 2020.

## How does your bioethics training guide your work?

It's helping me analyze problems during this pandemic. People have asked me for months, for example, about why we're not going to use nasopharyngeal swab testing to screen asymptomatic people. I've been really firm: I think the Minnesota Department of Health is right in asking us to not gobble up those scarce resources. It would be wasteful and unethical to use them solely to reassure ourselves that we don't have as much virus on campus as we worry we might. I was driven to find a solution that would allow us to do asymptomatic testing without using the state's precious health care resources. We are members of a larger community, and we owe it to that community to be responsible.

## You've fielded many questions about Macalester's reopening plans, including some asking you to provide answers with certainty. How do you respond?

I believe that if we let science guide our policies, we will come up with some solutions. We don't have the luxury to wait until things get easier to start making decisions. We're working really hard to preserve the parts of the Macalester experience that we believe we can manage this year. When people ask for certainty, I think behind that they're really saying, "Can you reassure me that, when this is all over, this is all going to be okay? Are we going to be okay?"

I do have a sense of optimism that we're going to get through this. When I was in school, I don't remember anybody telling me that the Roaring '20s followed a global pandemic during which people had to wear masks and children stayed home from school. I'm learning about that *now*. But what I know is that, by the time I was born, people were hugging and shaking hands and using buffets and going to concerts. The world did recover.

This won't be exactly like the flu pandemic. We're already learning about how it's different. But I do have a sense of optimism that we are going to get to a new normal that doesn't require all of these safety precautions, because we'll get a vaccine or a therapeutic that works.

## You weren't always on this path—you went right into a master of social work program after majoring in American civilization. Did you want to be a social worker?

I think I started trying to become a social worker because I thought that would be the most direct way to have an impact, to help make the world more compassionate and a fairer place. But I found that working one-on-one with individual clients was frustrating for me. It was an insight into my own personality: I grew impatient because I felt like I wasn't making change quickly enough. I can see now in hindsight that the problems my clients were facing were so complex, so much bigger than them in many cases: structural, intergenerational. I was naïve. I met with my mentor, Dean Harry Specht, and told him that circumstances were not changing quickly enough to make me feel as though I was making progress.

He said a couple of helpful things, beginning with, "First of all, it's not really about you and how you feel." But he also saw something in me that I couldn't see in myself. He suggested that perhaps my skills were better matched to make change at the level of policy and not individual patients. After he recommended me for the federal government's senior executive training program, I went to work for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It was immensely satisfying. If I had a parallel life, I would probably work in anti-poverty programs and government, still trying to achieve the same goals that Macalester aspires to: making a more just and peaceful world.

## What was another lightbulb moment in your career?

I worked for seven years at University of California–Irvine while my husband earned his PhD, but I didn't start imagining that I could be a scholar and leader in the academy until much later. We moved to Dallas, and I got a job at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. My boss, Nobel laureate Al Gilman, became like a father figure to me, and he encouraged me to go back to school. He said, "You're fantastic, but I can't promote you until you go to medical school or get a PhD."

I was a 35-year-old mother of two school-age kids and working full time, and I think I took his words as a personal challenge. And when I finished my PhD [in public affairs with an emphasis on health policy], Dr. Gilman not only promoted me, but he invited me to co-author a chapter of *The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics*, which is sort of the pharmacology bible for medical students. He wanted me to have a publication under my belt, and I will forever be linked to him through our joint scholarship together. It was an incredibly generous thing for him to do, but it also instilled in me a desire to contribute to my field for the benefit of other people. I really got into my role then as a faculty member and started doing original research projects and writing.

## What did you learn about change and risk from the pivots in your career path?

For me, those pivots are evidence of a liberal arts education's value. We expect to gain certain skills from a liberal arts education: critical thinking, effective communication, problem-solving. Check, check, check. But my education also gave me a broader confidence to try new things and take intellectual risks. The belief that our actions matter and make a difference. A sense of responsibility to be engaged in the world. All of those things contributed to my sense that these pivots were possible and were worth trying, despite the possibility that they wouldn't work out.

## When did you start thinking about becoming a college president?

I didn't have the audacity to imagine that I would be qualified to be a college president until relatively recently. Five or six years ago, I was at lunch one day with Case Western Reserve's president, Barbara Snyder, and she asked me what I eventually wanted to be. No one had ever really asked me that. It surprised me, and I sputtered an answer about just wanting to do my job the best way I could. And she pressed me: "When you're retiring, what do you want people to say?"


That was the first inkling I had about aspiring to be a college president. In the intervening time, I watched, I listened, I volunteered for leadership roles. I developed a national reputation in my field through speaking and writing. I took on responsibility in nonprofit board management, started learning the back end of how an institution of higher education works. Last year, President Snyder nominated me for the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' academy for Latinx higher education leaders who aspired to become presidents. That program started in August, the same month I applied for this job.

## What drew you to Mac?

Macalester's specific values resonated with me at a deep, personal level, in a way that made me feel like I could tell Macalester's story more effectively than I could tell the story of other places that did not have social justice at their core.

## What were your first experiences with social justice?

As a kid growing up in an immigrant home, in an immigrant neighborhood, I saw how people could be mistreated for who they are. I can remember as a child going to a store with my grandmother, who didn't speak English at all. I translated for her and saw how differently and disrespectfully people treated her because she couldn't communicate in English. I wouldn't have had a way of talking about that as a kid, but I saw it, and it made me upset.

By the time I got to high school, I became involved in social activism, but it was around the anti-nuclear movement. My mom still has newspaper clippings from protests that I attended. That experience ignited in me this idea that people have a responsibility to raise their voices when they see a need for change.

## How did your activism continue in college?

At Brown, I focused my activism on addressing social class inequality and thinking about all the ways that the university was designed to support and affirm the needs of wealthier students and, in a sense, alienate and keep out low-income students. I don't think that's true for my alma mater anymore—Brown has become a leader in the first-gen movement.

But when I got to Brown, I felt really out of place. I saw students who were bringing in stereo systems, computers, televisions, video games. People had matching comforter and curtain sets and incredible wardrobes. I showed up with a trunk, a suitcase that my mom had given me for graduation, and a black garbage bag that I stuffed with the bedding from my bed at home. I looked around and thought, "Every single person here bought their boots at L.L. Bean." And they all appeared to feel comfortable in that environment, because it was familiar to them. I contemplated transferring out, because I felt like that place was not made for people like me.

## But you didn't. What happened?

Early in the spring of my freshman year, I saw a school newspaper advertisement: "Are you having difficulty juggling your job with your academic responsibilities? Are you worried about your parents and sending money back home? If you want to come hang out and talk about money issues, come to this discussion group on Wednesday night." When I saw the ad, it was like, "Wait, there are other people here who are feeling like this, too?"

## RACIAL EQUITY VISION

In June, President Rivera outlined plans to develop three kinds of initiatives focused on diversity, inclusion, and equity at Macalester.

**A program to recruit and support the thriving of Black, Indigenous, and other students of color**

"People ask me if I want to create something like the Expanded Educational Opportunities program from the 1970s. My answer is yes—but it has to be a twenty-first century version. What I envision is a program that both increases the numbers of students from underrepresented groups and creates an environment in which they can excel. This will not be a program that in any way suggests students of color need remediation to belong and succeed here. I am envisioning a program centered on excellence, one that addresses the environment and the community and makes Mac a place where all of our students can flourish and thrive."

**A program to recruit and support faculty and staff of color**

"If we can implement a targeted opportunity or cluster hiring program that would bring in a critical mass of faculty of color from underrepresented groups, it would really help us move the needle in terms of making this a community in which our students can see themselves reflected in the faculty. It would bring in different voices, and it would send a strong signal about living our values."

**An approach to engage more deeply with partner institutions in and around St. Paul**

"Building on great work that's already happening, I want to grow relationships that are not extractive, where the college just takes from the city and views it as its laboratory. I want us to work shoulder to shoulder with Twin Cities residents to improve their well-being, contribute to the region's economic development, and form mutual relationships with bidirectional exchange of ideas, expertise, and knowledge, so that we all benefit."

### What did you find there?

About a dozen people showed up, including one who eventually became my spouse. All of us came to that first session beleaguered, shell-shocked, in various stages of thinking about transferring—just really struggling. Everyone shared the same sense of isolation.

As the discussion group wrapped up, we decided that we needed a club for financial aid students. We made one, and when officers were elected, Mike and I were elected co-presidents. The next fall, we fell in love in the process of running that organization. The club evolved into an advocacy group. We lobbied the university, for example, to keep the computer labs open all night because we argued that students with computers had an unfair advantage compared to those who worked in the cafeteria until 10 p.m. and still needed to write papers after their shift.

### How did that work change your perspective?

Taking that organization's reins allowed me to feel proud instead of ashamed. In my first year, I would've never wanted to admit to anybody that my family had been on public assistance and food stamps. By the time I was a senior, I was elected to speak at graduation, and I spoke about it publicly. That was the power of those four years. It instilled in me the sense that this is exactly what education is for: to give people not only the knowledge, but the tools, skills, and confidence to feel like they can go out and tackle bigger problems.

### What role should higher education institutions play in fighting structural inequities?

Long before the civil rights crisis that was sparked this summer in the Twin Cities, I already felt that higher education—like other sectors in our economy and other institutions in our society—was created by people with a very narrow idea about who was entitled to an education and who wasn't. Colleges and universities are in a really weird and tricky position. They're supposed to be both the mantle of tradition and the seat of innovation and change, simultaneously.

There's an inherent tension. Many would argue that the U.S. higher education system is the best in the world. We don't want to burn down these institutions. But part of innovation and change means taking a fresh look at all of the traditions, customs, and systems—and all of the gatekeeping. Instead of treating the academy like a fortress into which we will allow different people to travel over the moat with the alligators, we need to examine the structure itself.

What do we love about higher education that we should preserve? And what about it do we need to reconsider in order to be not just more equitable, but also *better*? I believe we are better when we are inclusive and open, when people can bring their whole selves to flourish on our campus.

### How do you balance this summer's calls for change with centering long-term plans?

My ideas haven't changed, but I have to be realistic about shifting our timeframe to accomplish those goals, because the immediate health and safety concerns we're facing have to be our top priority. We should not make the mistake of saying that attending to health and safety means we don't intend to dismantle structural racism, because indeed, structural racism *is* a health and safety threat. We can't pull them apart and treat them like they're different issues. But the bolder vision I have for Macalester involves initiatives that are going to take more time than I would have liked.

The truth is that patience is not one of my virtues. When I see something that's not fair, I want to change it right away. But I also am responsible for being an effective steward of this institution and making sure that it is on solid ground and can thrive well into the future so that generations of students to come can benefit from what Macalester has to offer.

"My leadership style is my personal style: forthright, energetic, and focused on people."

### What opportunities exist to build on Macalester's academic excellence?

Macalester's academic reputation is stellar and that is an incredibly strong foundation for the college that we can continue to build on and grow. Our faculty members are first-rate scholars and teachers. Students who come here delve deeply into complex topics and are taught to approach problems in interdisciplinary ways. There also are many opportunities for students to collaborate meaningfully with faculty on research projects that frequently result in publications in top-tier journals. It's this academic excellence that gives our students the tools to go out and change the world.

### How do you describe your leadership style, and how has it evolved?

My leadership style is my personal style: forthright, energetic, and focused on people. I'm very transparent, which sometimes can be perceived as too honest, but I don't beat around the bush so people know exactly where I stand. That said, I genuinely am interested in others' advice and input so, although I am decisive, I try to keep an open mind and can be persuaded to change gears. I think I've gotten better at reflection and I'm really working on patience.

### How do you practice lifelong learning?

I love learning. School has always for me been a place of both order and wonder. As a scholar, when I'm doing research, I derive joy from making new discoveries. In my personal life, I like to learn as part of whatever I'm doing recreationally—which means I read up on a country before I visit, I read restaurant reviews before I dine out, and I like to try new things whenever I get the chance.

### What are you hearing from Mac alumni?

I see alumni as the largest branch of Macalester's family tree. You're only a student for four years—you're an alum for life. It's critically important to engage our alumni at every opportunity. Every alumnus who writes to me gets a response from me. By and large, alumni have been extremely supportive: understanding that I'm taking the helm at a really difficult time, applauding our bold messages, affirming the need to be anti-racist and work on social justice.

### What's another issue that you're watching in higher education?

Affordability. Everyone's feeling that pressure. Skyrocketing tuition is a concern for access, but it's also just unsustainable. From expanded counseling services to Title IX officers and dozens of other activities, colleges are being asked to do and provide so much more than they were 20 years ago. And I'm not criticizing those programs—I'm glad we provide them. But they all cost money so we have to account for them.

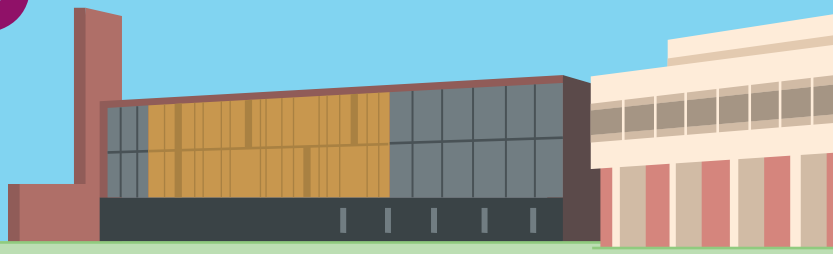
We need to think about different business models for higher education, where the cost of tuition will not consistently outstrip cost-of-living increases. Might we experiment, for example, with more summer classes?

### What brings you hope in this difficult season?

I could go on and on. The way young people are leading right now, with passion and righteous objections to injustice. The creativity and imagination our staff and faculty are putting into reconfiguring what we do. The ways our students are pulling together to support one another. The courage and dedication of health care providers, scientists, first responders, and others who are working tirelessly to make us safer. The natural beauty of Minnesota and the glorious weather we've had this summer.

I have a lot of hope and optimism about the future of our college and our country. And I hope everyone votes in November.

# MAP TO THE FUTURE



What's your Macalester moment?

When we launched The Macalester Moment campaign publicly in October 2018, we asked the whole Macalester community, including current students, to reflect on their own moments of self-discovery and to help make moments possible for future generations by supporting the campaign.

Autumn DeLong '20 is one of those students. She arrived at Macalester from rural Iowa four years ago, with plans to major in political science and work on immigration reform.

"My first semester, I was taking a class in the Religious Studies Department with Jim Laine and it felt like I was suddenly home," she says. "It allowed me to open the door and have this huge space to explore the way religion had been presented to me before."

DeLong eventually decided to double-major in religious studies and international studies and continued pursuing her interests in immigration policy, law, and human rights—just using different academic lenses.

The highly successful Macalester Moment campaign for access and excellence concluded on May 31. Co-chaired by Annette Mortinson Whaley '75 and Michael Huber '90, the campaign raised more than $126 million in endowed funds, planned gifts to support future student and faculty needs, and Macalester Fund current-use support, far exceeding our goal of $100 million.

The campaign focused on four pillars tied to the college's strategic plan: financial aid to provide access to students regardless of their family's resources; faculty and academic support, including more opportunities for student/faculty research and support for endowed professorships; enriched and expanded programming in Career Exploration and Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and a new theater and dance building; and the Macalester Fund, to ensure annual support for every department and every student, creating meaningful and wide-ranging experiences.

DeLong's college experience was enhanced by all four pillars. Financial aid helped bring her to Macalester. Support from endowed scholarships, including the Roetzel Family Summer Fellowship in Religious Studies and the Mary Frances Johnstone Kagin Memorial Endowed Scholarship, helped her pursue research opportunities with Professor Laine and Professor James von Geldern.

Macalester faculty members are the type of teachers who "walk alongside you" during research and help students discover and trust their own thinking, says DeLong. She's pursuing graduate studies at Union Theological Seminary in New York City remotely this fall. She says her experiences at Mac have made her feel really prepared for grad school.

It's probably too early to say what DeLong herself will recall as her own pivotal moment at Macalester. More likely, for her and other students, it's a collection of moments in and out of the classroom, as distinctive as each person. Her research experiences. Studying abroad in Peru. Four years of choir which she describes as a "rock that's bound all of us together." A January MacConnect trip to Washington, D.C., through Career Exploration that explored careers in human rights. Even remote learning and a remote graduation ceremony during the pandemic this past spring. "Macalester really taught me to appreciate the ups and the downs," she says. "And I think that's actually something that made the pandemic easier in a lot of ways."

The generous and extraordinary support of The Macalester Moment campaign from the entire community of alumni, faculty, staff, parents, students, and others has transformed the college. It's provided us real-time flexibility to pivot quickly to new ways of teaching and learning in a global crisis, and provided a living map to the future that will inspire Macalester students for years to come while allowing President Suzanne Rivera to build on its vision.

"Every time I think about leaving this place I get more excited for the students who are going to come after me, who will get the opportunities to have some of the experiences I've had," says DeLong. "It's been such a privilege to be here, and I'm grateful for it every day."

Take a stroll around Macalester to see the many ways your campaign support has shaped, reconfigured, and revitalized the student experience at our college.

# THE MACALESTER MOMENT

A CAMPAIGN FOR ACCESS AND EXCELLENCE

The campaign raised more than $126 million in endowed funds, planned gifts to support future student and faculty needs, and Macalester Fund current-use support.

## CAMPAIGN PILLARS

**FINANCIAL AID:** $40 million raised to preserve our commitment to meeting 100 percent of the demonstrated financial need for every admitted student.

**PROGRAM SUPPORT:** $20 million raised to build the new theater and dance building and provide endowed support for Career Exploration and Entrepreneurship and Innovation programs.

**FACULTY AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT:** $20 million raised to help attract and retain diverse and distinguished scholars, expand course offerings and student/faculty research opportunities, and support new endowed professorships.

**MACALESTER FUND:** Achieved a single-year record of $5 million and raised a total of $19.7 million during the campaign.

## KEY

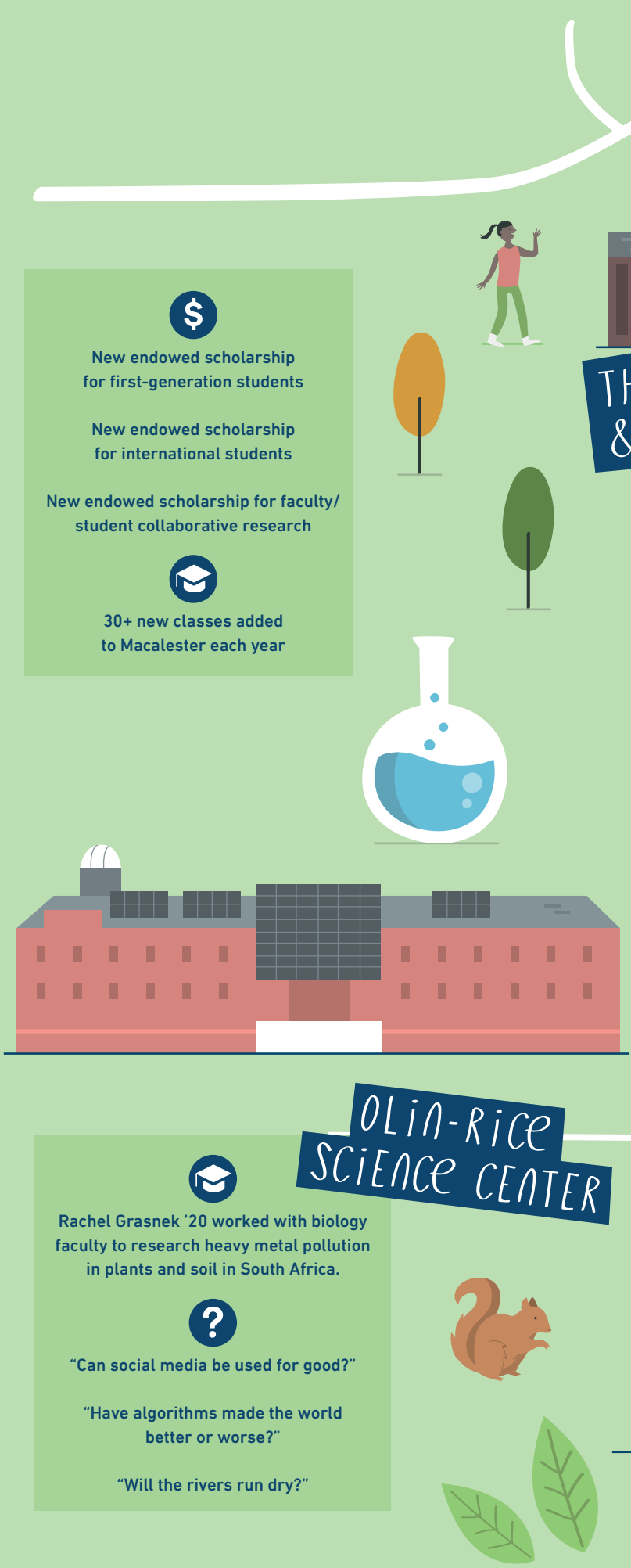
- **Financial Aid**
- **Program Support**
- **Faculty and Academic Support**
- **Macalester Fund**
- **Student Voices**
- **Inside Scoop**
- **Big Questions.** 1) Some of the topics that Macalester students are digging into, in and out of the classroom; 2) a series of campaign events featuring conversations with faculty and staff at locations around the country, and in London.

New endowed scholarship for first-generation students

New endowed scholarship for international students

New endowed scholarship for faculty/student collaborative research

30+ new classes added to Macalester each year

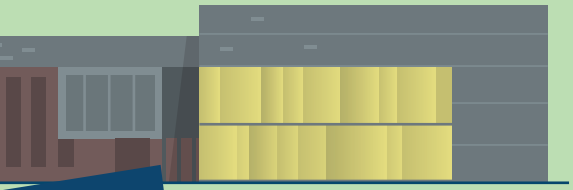



Rachel Grasnek '20 worked with biology faculty to research heavy metal pollution in plants and soil in South Africa.

"Can social media be used for good?"

"Have algorithms made the world better or worse?"

"Will the rivers run dry?"



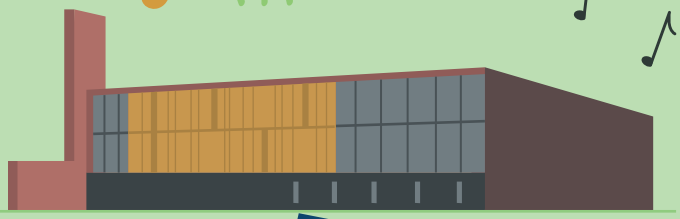
## HEATER & DANCE

Expanded dance and theater studios, updated tech, bird-friendly windows, a flexible theater space, 11 flexible classrooms, and a skyway linking the arts to the sciences in Olin-Rice

Inaugural production *Letters|Home*, a devised dance-theater performance, celebrated the ways humans relate to "home."

Performances followed by community talk-backs with local leaders about Native lands, the Rondo neighborhood in St. Paul, gay bars, and homelessness

"How do we create a stage that helps audiences imagine a world guided by social equity?"



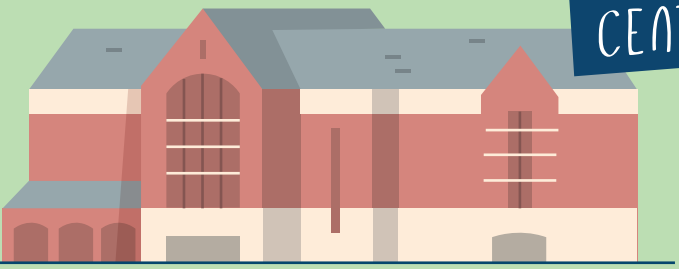
## MUSIC

"Can embracing the arts reconnect our common humanity?"

## ART

## HUMANITIES

"How do race and class intersect with the #MeToo movement?"



## LEONARD CENTER

"Does activism belong in athletics?"

## CARNEGIE HALL

Karinna Gerhardt '20 worked with political science faculty to research alt-right extremism.

Abe Asher '20 worked with religious studies faculty to research religious Zionism and religious violence in 21st-century Israel.

"Does who we elect really matter?"

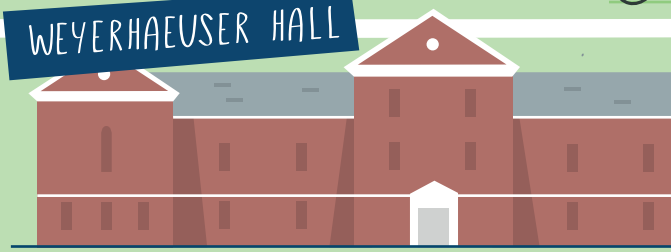
"How will we sustainably feed nine billion people in 2050?"

"What are the trickle-down effects of economic nationalism?"

"Is democracy worth saving?"

"Should the Supreme Court be the most important issue in any presidential election?"

## WEYERHAEUSER HALL

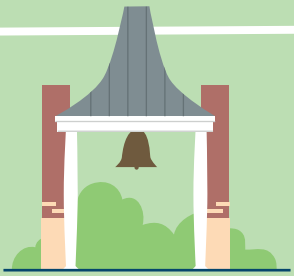


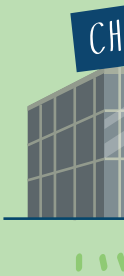
## OLD MAIN

Liam McMahon '20 worked with history faculty to research The Troubles in Northern Ireland.

"Do the humanities matter?"

"Is it possible to write a story without being political?"





## DEWITT WALLACE LIBRARY

Entrepreneurship and Innovation becomes a permanent, sustainable program, with plenty of room to grow.

Endowment of Entrepreneurship and Innovation director position

MacNest provides internships for students to work closely with founders of Twin Cities startups.

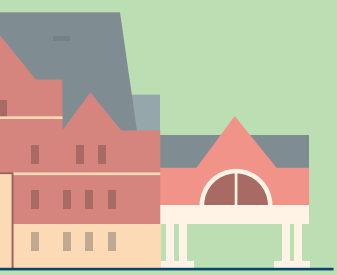
Live It Fund provides funding to students who identify an opportunity or problem and propose an innovative solution.

New this summer, paid remote internships through Mac Project Corps match student teams with local companies and orgs that need new perspectives on a problem or idea.

"The [Live It Fund] has given me a new perspective on entrepreneurship in that it doesn't necessarily have to be a business model. It can be more like sharing skills people to people." –Malini Basu '21 (Kolkata, India)

Team Mac-Attack won the 2019 Macathon (a 24-hour startup and hackathon mash-up) with "Period," a period subscription box that is customizable, organic, sustainable, and gender-neutral to reach a new demographic of people who menstruate. Team: Emelie Beattie '21, Isabel Meyer-Mueller '21, Georgia Kazemi '21, Kate Bond '21, Clare Stafford '21.

This summer, MacNester Precious Dlamini '21 (Manzini, Kingdom of Eswatini) worked remotely for Bim Bam Boo, a company that makes tree-free bamboo TP.



# THE MACALESTER FUND

**supports every student, every faculty and staff member, every department at Macalester.**

Macalester Fund gifts go to work immediately to provide things like:

- Flexibility to support remote student learning and programming for every department
- Supplemental financial aid support for students whose needs have increased with the pandemic or who are facing unanticipated expenses
- Funds that strengthen the student experience, from leadership programs to community-building initiatives

## KAGIN COMMONS

New endowed scholarship for students actively involved in the Department of Multicultural Life

Reimagined and expanded, the Career Exploration program meets the needs of today's students with robust programming that starts during a student's first year.

Endowment of Career Exploration dean position

Endowment of paid internships so students of all backgrounds can take part in these opportunities

"Every employee that I've met at the Minnesota Department of Health has offered to meet privately and discuss what they do as well as bring up collaboration opportunities for me. Interns are valued and quickly involved in work that matters." –Jack Fong Gougoutas '20 (San Francisco)

"Why isn't inclusion enough?"

"What does the rise of entrepreneurship and career development on campus say about the future of the liberal arts?"

APEL

CAMPUS CENTER

MARKIM HALL

STORY BY JULIE HESSLER '85
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM WOOLLEY

Whatever direction they're heading, Macalester students are equipped with courage, an empathetic, global perspective, and 21st-century skills.

**CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION:**

- Community-wide support from alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents, and others
- Active and engaged campus volunteers helped raise visibility and dollars: The faculty and staff campaign committee helped increase the number of annual faculty and staff donors by 30 percent over the campaign's course, while the efforts of student Class Agents increased student giving by 1,241 percent.
- Expanded the college's volunteer base to 1,300 volunteers
- New Alumni Board working groups started moving the needle in athletics, diversity, and career connections.
- Doubled planned gifts to the college, with great support from several 50th Reunion classes. Thanks, Golden Scots!

Together, we raised more than

**$126 million**

for Macalester students!

**THANK YOU!**

# INTERNATIONAL FORECAST

## For international college students eager to study in the United States, COVID-19 is just the latest complication.

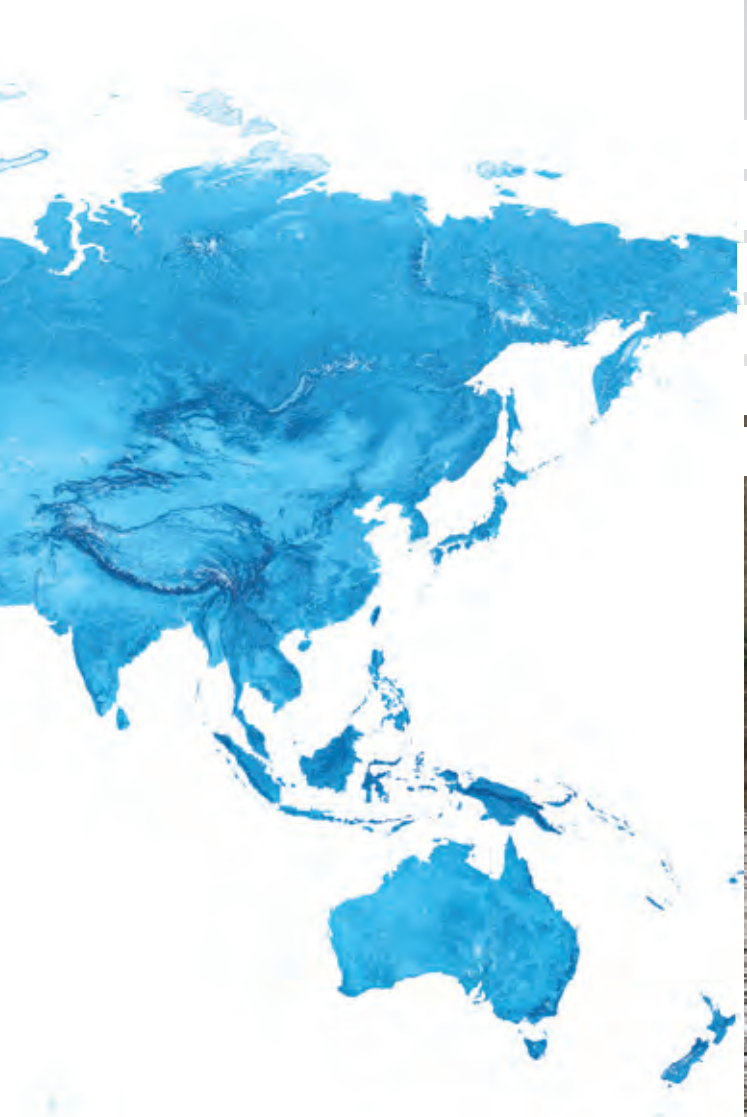
BY LAURA BILLINGS COLEMAN

Political science major Yunze Wang '22 (Suzhou Jiangsu, China) was on the first leg of a long-planned spring break flight to London on March 11 when the World Health Organization announced the novel coronavirus raging through China and parts of Europe had officially erupted into a global pandemic.

The news alert sparked a flurry of unrest among his fellow passengers, many, like Wang, already wearing masks and protective gear. But their anxieties soon grew into a full-blown panic hours later when the United States announced a ban of flights from Europe—restrictions that would soon be extended to the United Kingdom. "It was like the whole world just started to shut down while I was in midair," Wang says. "I was on this trip that was just supposed to last a few days, but suddenly, there was nowhere to go."

Invited to quarantine in a suburban home with his boyfriend's family, Wang quickly got accustomed to joining his Macalester classmates for Zoom classes and Google Hangouts from several time zones away. But staying up to date on the continually evolving headlines about foreign travel bans, visa delays, and international student restrictions has been far more challenging for Wang, one of more than 300 international students at Macalester who have kept the school's International Student Programs working overtime since the start of the pandemic.

"Every new announcement that comes through causes



**"IT WAS LIKE THE WHOLE WORLD JUST STARTED TO SHUT DOWN WHILE I WAS IN MIDAIR."**
**–YUNZE WANG '22**

so much stress and uncertainty—I have so many airline vouchers from so many canceled plans," Wang says. "But every time, Macalester has been proactive at anticipating all of the things that might come our way, and helping us with every step."

This summer, for instance, Wang learned that the shift to online classes could jeopardize the visas of incoming international students—a threat the Trump administration went on to reverse several days later after more than 200 colleges and universities backed court briefs opposed to federal immigration authorities. To bypass travel restrictions from the U.K. and Europe first imposed in March, Wang considered traveling to unrestricted countries like Turkey or Cambodia to quarantine on his own before trying to return to campus. But in late July, the U.S. State Department changed course, allowing international students with existing visas to return from Europe just in time for the start of classes in September. "It's fortunate that I'm a political science major because I got very skilled at reading the fine print on government documents," he says.

Though his unexpected five-month odyssey gave him plenty of time to reflect on his future plans, Wang says he never considered going to college anywhere else. "Macalester is where my friends are, it's where my life is," he says. "Though I will say that everything has gotten much more complicated in the United States, it's still where I want to be."

Whether colleges and universities can count on international students to keep coming to the U.S. in the wake of COVID-19 and other complications is a question that could change the economics and culture of American higher education for years to come. Not only do international students spend more than $41 billion in the U.S. every year, they also bring something essential to colleges like Macalester, which has made internationalism part of its mission and culture for more than 70 years.

"It's one thing for a student to talk about issues, challenges, opportunities, and effecting change with students who share a similar background. It's a wholly different, and better, educational experience to dig into those same conversations with students whose perspectives are different from yours," says Jeff Allen, vice president for admissions and financial aid at Macalester. The college currently enrolls 315 international students from more than 70 countries and supports many of those students through extensive need-based financial aid. "To fully live Macalester's mission as an institution, we feel a responsibility to do whatever we can to enroll talented international students from around the world."

The number of international students at U.S. colleges and universities reached an all-time high in 2018-19, with 1,095,299 students enrolled in undergraduate, graduate, or Optional Practice Training (OPT) programs that allow non-U.S. students to pursue internships and career opportunities for a period of time after graduation. And while the size of America's international student population is nearly twice that of Great Britain's, the U.S.'s next closest competitor, many countries are gaining ground fast. "There's a lot more competition in the international student admissions game and many countries are really ramping up their recruitment efforts," says Sarah Schmidt, Macalester's associate director of international admissions.

Both Canada and Australia are seeing double-digit growth in international enrollments, she says, "while countries like the Netherlands have just exploded onto the scene." At the same time, countries that once exported a large share of college-age students looking for more personalized instruction have begun creating new university options at home. "In India, Singapore, and many other places you're starting to see the development of institutions that look more and more like U.S.-style liberal arts colleges," Schmidt says.

Headlines about American gun violence, racial unrest, and anti-immigration rhetoric have also had a dampening effect on new international enrollment in the U.S., which has dropped by about 10 percent since 2015. That timeline also coincides with a significant change in tone and policy from the White House, which has proposed or implemented a series of measures that make it more difficult for international students to stay and work in the United States after graduation. "With threats about the availability of visas, and efforts to destabilize programs like OPT, many students and their families have concluded that the U.S. is just not as friendly to immigrants and international students as it used to be," says Schmidt.

The trade war with China has been especially troubling for America's higher education institutions, as students from that country account for nearly a third of all international students and an estimated $15 billion in tuition payments. In late August, after the arrest of a Chinese national at the University of Virginia, relations grew even more strained, as U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo floated the idea of restricting Chinese students from studying in the U.S. (The threat of deportation has grown so troubling to many international students, in fact, that several students contacted for this story declined to be interviewed or named over concerns that it could jeopardize their visa status.)

"If you take all of these factors into account, it was already clear that recruiting international students for the Class of 2024 was going to be challenging and uncertain," says Schmidt. "And that's when COVID hit."

**"THE SILVER LINING TO ALL OF THIS IS THAT WE QUICKLY LEARNED HOW TO MAKE THE MACALESTER EXPERIENCE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, WHO CANNOT VISIT."**
**–JEFF ALLEN**

When the first reports from Wuhan, China, made headlines this winter, Macalester was deep into the admissions cycle, sending early decision letters to select high school seniors and taking a close look at new applications. A month later, when the college elected to cancel its usual round of admissions receptions for accepted students in China, "I thought, maybe this will give us an opportunity to cultivate students in countries we typically are not able to visit," Schmidt remembers. A month after that, "No, this going to disrupt everything."

Minnesota's statewide shutdown came down at the start of the so-called "yield season," when admitted students make their college decision. With offices evacuated, classrooms closed, and travel prohibited, Macalester's Admissions, Communications, and Events staff quickly combined forces to shift all of the school's decision-making marketing messages online, with Zoom presentations, YouTube videos, and social media posts to engage students who could no longer come to see the campus. Professors shot informational talks about their departments on their own iPhones, while current international students were deployed to answer questions about the Macalester experience from potential recruits.

"The silver lining to all of this is that we quickly learned how to make the Macalester experience more accessible to students, including international students, who cannot visit," says Allen. "New tools and initiatives helped us reach students, communicate the value of the Mac experience, and express our interest in admitted students joining the Mac community. So there's something to be said for the new ways of engaging with students that we only prioritized because of COVID."

While some higher education observers had predicted a drop in international enrollments between 25 and 60 percent for the Class of 2024, Allen says, "If we've learned anything this year, it's that there is still strong interest in Macalester *and* there is little value in making predictions about the future. Too much remains unpredictable."

Instead, the Admissions staff promoted Macalester's strengths with international students, from the United Nations flag that flies at the center of campus, to its long partnership with the United World Colleges, and to notable international alums like Kofi Annan '61 and Siah Armajani '63. While the college showed prospective students the unique advantages of attending a small liberal arts college in a major urban center, it also worked hard to make sure that current international students were being well cared for in spite of the chaotic circumstances. With recent changes to the National Association for College Admission Counseling's ethics code that now make it possible to "poach" current students or those who've already accepted an offer, Schmidt says, "Our mindset was that our plan couldn't just be about convincing students to say yes to Macalester, but also holding on to the students we already have."

Like many colleges, Macalester made a student-centered decision to move its reply deadline back by a month to give students and families hard-hit by the coronavirus crisis and the economic collapse a chance to make more informed decisions. Though the school granted 17 deferrals to January and 61 to September 2021 for the Class of 2024 overall, the number of international students who decided to come to Macalester "turned out to be a very pleasant surprise," says Schmidt. "We were hoping for 60, and instead we welcomed 66 this academic year."


"Making sure these students can all get to Minnesota at some point is now the complicated part," says Aaron Colhapp, director of Macalester's International Student Program. With many consulates shut down due to COVID, and bureaucratic paperwork backlogged for months, nearly two-thirds of Macalester's incoming international students were unable to secure visas in time for the start of the school's first module in September. "We don't know anyone at this point getting visas from China," says Colhapp, who keeps close tabs on the progress each international student has been making on their official paperwork, while recording their scheduled visa appointments. "We're starting to see some progress—two students in July, seven in August, eight in September, and 12 in October."

With a cohort of incoming international students now at every compass point, Macalester moved the traditional international student orientation sessions online as well. On one Zoom call in late August, a host of Macalester student mentors were introducing themselves to their new mentees, sharing inside tips about what to bring to Minnesota and what to leave at home. While most would be starting the school year online, and months late, the questions they had about outfitting their dorm rooms and navigating the neighborhoods of St. Paul made clear how eager students are to be face-to-face with each other in the future.

"When you get here," Colhapp explained to one student, "there's a store you may have heard about called Target..."

While those rites of passage will probably involve face coverings, physical distancing, and door-step deliveries for the foreseeable future, Allen says he's been moved by how many international students are willing to navigate this new normal. "One thing that's become apparent to me is just how much Macalester's international students are committed to having a residential liberal arts experience," he says. "It's great evidence of the value of what we do when you see how hard many of our international students have worked just to get to campus this year."

One of those incoming students will be Masa Holocsi, a former United World College student from Hungary who says she fell in love with what she read and heard about Macalester's history of social activism and community engagement while she was evaluating her college choices. Though she's been paying close attention to the COVID flare-ups in the Midwest, protests in the wake of George Floyd's killing, and the upcoming presidential election, she says none of these concerns will keep her from coming to Macalester to begin college in January.

"I even think that by coming to a place like Macalester I can hopefully be part of making some things better," she says. Though she acknowledges that making new friends and connections may be more challenging because of COVID-19, when less extraordinary times return, "I know I will be in the right place."

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

## WHAT I LEARNED DURING QUARANTINE

When college campuses shut down in March, most domestic students went home, while an estimated 90 percent of international students were stuck in place, due to flight restrictions, financial troubles, or fears they wouldn't be allowed to return to the United States. Here's how some of Macalester's international students spent their time:

### SIVALI BHANDARY • NEPAL

With parents and grandparents who live together in Kathmandu, Nepal, Sivali Bhandary '23 worried that taking the 7,500-mile journey back home would only expose her older relatives to COVID risk. Luckily, she also has an aunt and uncle in Minneapolis, who made room for Bhandary to continue her classwork from their home. "During the second half of my first year at Macalester I was just starting to feel at home, when COVID broke those connections," says Bhandary, a biology major who has turned to Snapchat and Instagram to meet other Mac students stuck at home, and meeting up for occasional physically distanced hangouts. "Meeting new people and going for walks has helped me feel more sane. Zoom fatigue is real."

### ALEX HOPKINS • SOUTH AFRICA

Born in Boston, but raised in South Africa since 2010, Alex Hopkins '22 says being quarantined seven time zones away from his family has been a challenge. Now living off campus, and working for Mac's International Student Programs, he says one unexpected advantage of online learning has been "the ability to watch all of the week's lectures posted on Monday, which gave me my evenings free." An economics major and computer science minor, Hopkins is still holding out hope that he'll be able to study away at the University of Edinburgh next year, but admits, "It's not looking good."

### JESSICA (WENYANG) DING • CHINA

A native of Shenzhen, China, Jessica (Wenyang) Ding '22 heard the first-hand details of China's COVID outbreak from her uncle and aunt, both medical professionals in one of the country's dedicated COVID hospitals. "At the beginning of the quarantine, my mom said 'Stay where you are, the U.S. has better medical resources than China, and we're already starting to control it, so you'll be fine.' But then by June, the U.S. and China were a completely different picture." A psychology major, Ding moved off campus and spends her free time taking additional language lessons and teaching herself how to make some classic family recipes. "I learned lots of recipes from my grandmother and my mom, so I can't wait to go back to China where they can taste what I make."

BY DANIEL P. SMITH / PHOTO BY JULIA VANDENOEVER

Though Brady Robinson '95 never intended to be a conservationist, he's on an unrelenting mission today to defend America's natural treasures.

As The Conservation Alliance's executive director, Robinson teams with national companies like Merrell, Patagonia, Clif Bar, and REI to protect and restore America's wild places for both recreation and wildlife. The Alliance's efforts help to ensure that animals will enjoy healthy conditions in national parks like Yosemite and that future generations can experience the grandeur of places like the Appalachian Trail and Grand Canyon.

Robinson visited with *Macalester Today* to discuss his unexpected career and his passionate push to preserve the great outdoors.

**Growing up in a rural, forested area outside of St. Peter, Minnesota,** Robinson enjoyed childhood trips to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and climbed trees, honoring his mother's orders that he only ascend high enough to risk breaking his legs. "I liked adventure and felt compelled to do hard things in the outdoors, even if they sometimes weren't rational."

**As a Macalester philosophy major,** Robinson ventured to Lander, Wyoming, for a semester-long National Outdoor Leadership School course. That three-month endeavor, dominated by instructors with unkempt hair and tan faces savoring lives of outdoor adventure, altered Robinson's life. "It was the first time I had ever met people I wanted to be like when I grew up. Finally, I saw a path in which my career and my passion for outdoor places would sync up."

**Following graduation (and some groveling), Robinson was hired as an assistant instructor at Outward Bound,** a non-profit provider of experiential-based outdoor education. Over the next dozen years, Robinson connected with people from all walks of life, traveled the world observing different cultures and geographies, and developed an even deeper appreciation for nature's inherent lessons. "Outdoor education provided an opportunity to teach ethical principles without ever preaching, and I consistently found myself in environments in which virtuous actions—selflessness, compassion, and courage—naturally arose."

**Before joining the Oregon-based Conservation Alliance last November,** Robinson spent 11 years leading the Access Fund, the national organization that keeps climbing areas open and conserved, before a stint at Tompkins Conservation, an organization that protects wild habitats and promotes biodiversity. Those stops taught Robinson how to mobilize support and further accelerated his commitment to explore the proper relationship between humans and natural spaces. "It awoke in me this absolute need to promote conservation."

**An organization of like-minded businesses whose collective contributions help protect wild places for habitat and outdoor recreation,** The Conservation Alliance has safeguarded more than 52 million acres of wildlands since its inception in 1989, while also protecting 3,112 miles of rivers, designating five marine reserves, and purchasing 14 climbing areas. Robinson considers it incredibly impactful work. "Outdoor experiences build better people who are healthier, who make better decisions, and who can take other people, other creatures, and other perspectives into account."

**While Robinson believes people's individual experiences with the land will fuel conservation**—"If it hadn't been for those early experiences climbing trees in Minnesota, I might never have joined the many voices advocating for the protection of our nation's cliffs, trails, rivers, and outdoor places"—he believes businesses play a vital role as well. "Finance plays into environmental issues, and the business world must see their responsibility to stand up and help protect wild places."

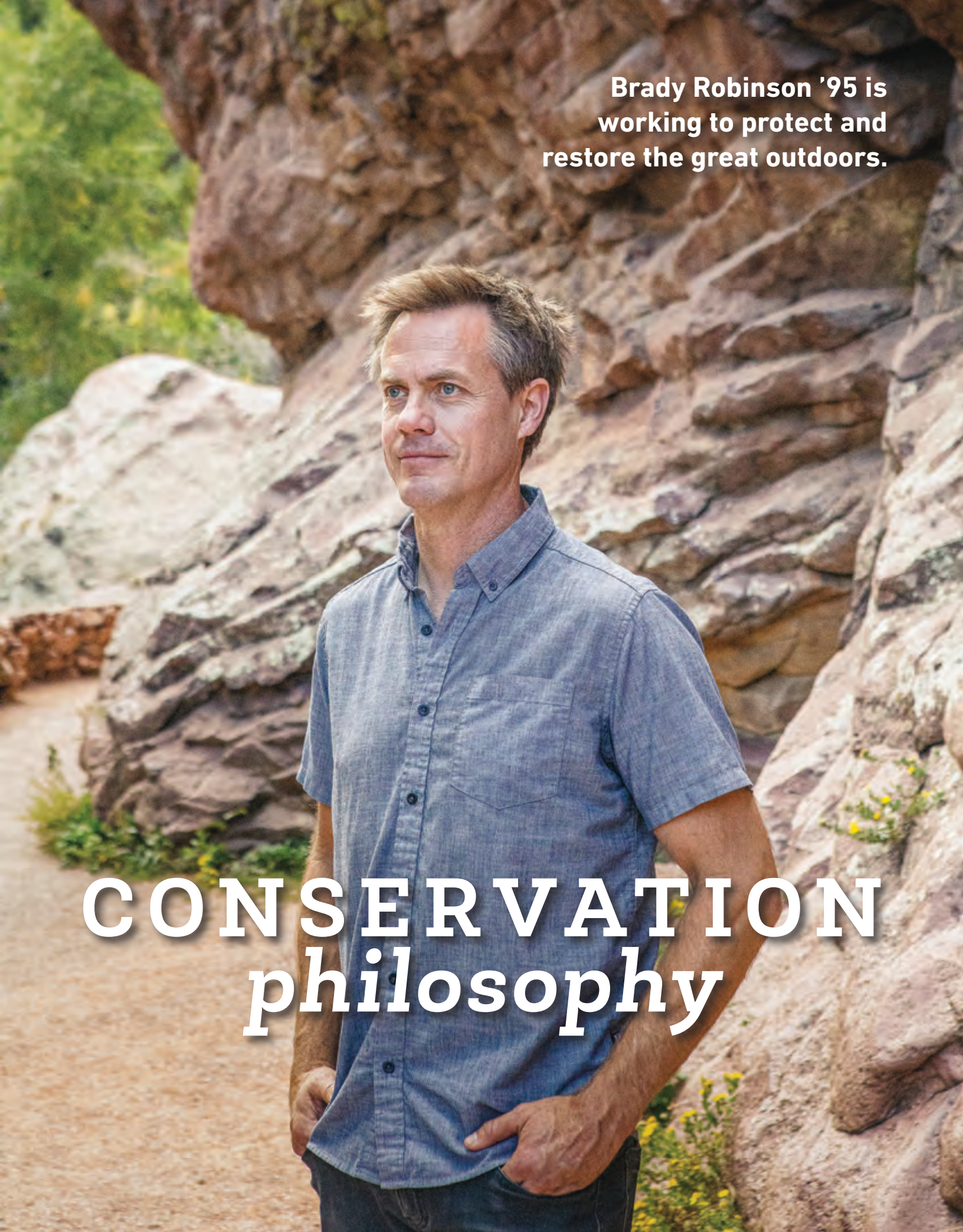
**The point of The Conservation Alliance?** To leverage business voices for conservation efforts and to do so through the lens of outdoor recreation, a concept that cuts across partisan lines. The organization enables businesses to support conservation through strategic grantmaking and strong advocacy. "At our best, we make it relatively easy for businesses to do the right thing."

**Decisions about equity and inclusion are woven into the work.** "As a grantmaker, we can either perpetuate biases and power structures within the environmental conservation world, or we can empower underrepresented voices. In the case of public lands, elevating and supporting Indigenous voices is especially critical." The Conservation Alliance recently awarded a grant to the Gwich'in Steering Committee for its work to defend the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) from oil extraction: "To the Gwich'in, the ANWR is the sacred place where life begins."

**While outdoor brands like Patagonia and Merrell have a vested business interest in protecting wild places,** Robinson looks to expand The Conservation Alliance's membership into other industries and reach a broader audience. To accomplish that, he leans on his Macalester philosophy training, namely crafting a persuasive argument. Recently, Robinson wrote a note to The Conservation Alliance's bank about taking a stand against extraction in the ANWR. "In putting together an argument, you must be respectful, yet forceful. That's something I learned at Mac."

**The ultimate question that energizes Robinson: do humans have it within themselves to course-correct?** "That's a deeply meaningful and intellectually interesting question to me, and one that's also central to my work at The Conservation Alliance. I believe we can course-correct, though it requires being intentional about how we're treating the planet." M

Daniel P. Smith is a Chicago-based journalist.



**Brady Robinson '95 is working to protect and restore the great outdoors.**

# CONSERVATION *philosophy*

# Cognitive

BY JULIE HESSLER '85 / ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD MIA

How do we learn, remember, and think? Students in "Cognitive Psychology," taught by Professor Ariel James, are exploring these and other cognitive phenomena this fall. When the pandemic hit, James was collecting data about people's eye movement records, part of her research into language processing. She told us more about what she's found, and provided a window into the cognitive "things we do all the time"—almost, we might say, without thinking.

## What's the definition of cognitive psychology?

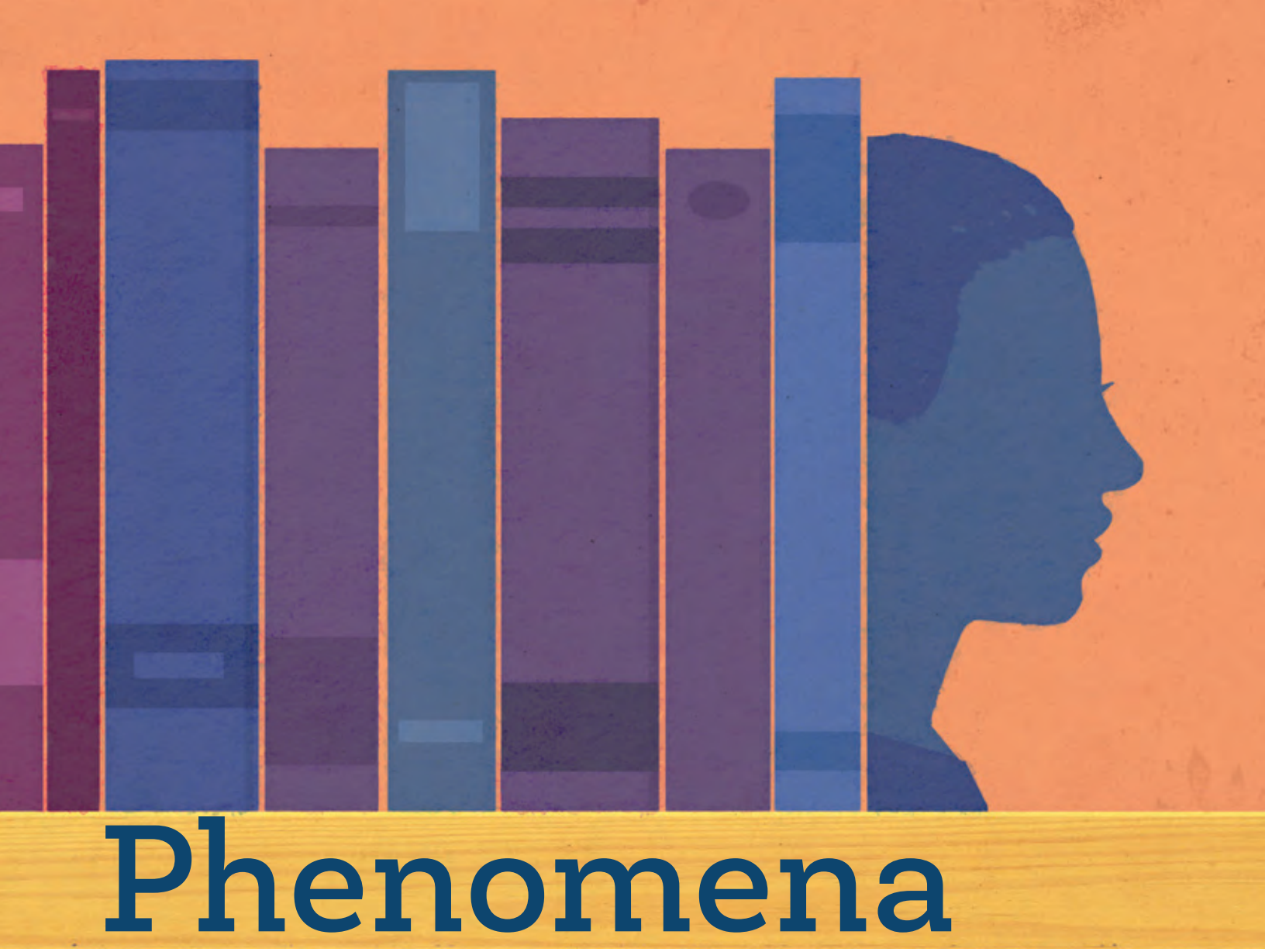
Cognitive psychology is about how we think—how we represent and process information. The main topics include memory, perception, attention, but also more complex things like language, problem-solving, and decision-making.

## What does your research focus on?

I measure individual differences in language processing. For example, some people just read faster in general—they read every word faster. I'm more interested in how speed depends on how complex the sentence is. Person A might breeze through a tricky sentence. Person B might generally breeze through sentences, but get confused at a tricky part and go back to re-read. Is there something that predicts whether you are going to be like Person A or Person B? When people come into the lab, they read sentences one word at a time and I measure how long they spend in different parts of sentences. I test their memory, vocabulary, attention, speed of perceptual processing, and then I look for correlations between those scores and reading times.

## What have you found in your research?

Something that came out of my research is not so much about how language processing works but more about how measurement works. If you test a person one day and then bring them in again a week later, is their performance similar? These are things that correlational psychologists who give people personality or intelligence tests need to know about their tests, but it's not as common to take experimental effects like eye movements or reaction times and treat them in that same way. I'm looking for evidence of these reliable individual differences as a way to build more complexity into the tests so I can ask deeper language questions.



# Phenomena

## How do people learn, remember, and think?

One of the main lessons of cognitive psychology is that we're talking about things we do all the time, but we have very poor intuition about them. We might have a sense of how we read, or how we study best, or what we're going to remember later, but we don't actually have very good awareness of these processes that happen really quickly and maybe in a way that's not that intuitive.

## What's an example?

There are studies about learning on purpose—like studying for a test. Students are brought into the lab to study a long text that they will be tested on later. They are either given a choice of how to study, or they're assigned: either re-read the material or test themselves on it, perhaps by writing down as much as they remember, or by doing a practice test. Student typically pick re-reading if given the choice, or predict that re-reading will work well. Counter to what the students predict, when you test them later, the people who made themselves practice retrieving (like doing a practice test) do better than people who just re-read. There are different explanations for why that might be, but doing any sort of deep processing where you really have to work with the information is better for storing that information.

## What are obstacles to learning, remembering, or thinking?

Our memories are not great. We don't just look at things and then store them exactly the way that they happened. Our brains work very hard to make things make sense. Sometimes that makes it so that we don't represent the world accurately. Perception, for example, can be exploited with different optical illusions. When we look at stuff, we don't look at all of it equally. We focus on things we think are meaningful.

A demonstration we often do in class is looking at an array of pennies. All of them are slightly off—maybe the date is on the wrong side or Lincoln's profile faces left—except one. What's meaningful is not which way Lincoln is facing or where *E Pluribus Unum* is located, but rather, do I have one cent to make change? That's the level that you're thinking about it. Just because you have used pennies countless times doesn't mean you've perfectly encoded everything about what a penny looks like. Our minds are efficient. You don't need to memorize all the things about all the things. That's not how you get through the day. You get through the day by acting on things that actually matter. M


# EQUAL HARVEST

Marichel Mejia ’11 helps farmworkers fight for fairness.

BY RACHEL ROSTAD '15 / PHOTO BY KIRA FRIEDMAN

Last December, Marichel Mejia '11 sat in the House of Representatives Gallery, breathlessly watching the screen that displayed the vote tally. She sat with 40 of her colleagues: members of United Farm Workers and the UFW Foundation, all wearing their red shirts with the union's trademark black eagle across the chest. They had spent the last year working around the clock to advocate for the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, which would grant undocumented farmworkers a path towards legal immigration status.

They watched the board with the display of votes in nerve-wracking silence. They needed 218 supporters, a simple majority. They got 260.

Audience members aren't supposed to say anything in the chamber, but the group stood up and shouted the famous slogan of UFW: "*Si, se puede!*" Yes, it can be done!

Mejia's career with UFW and the UFW Foundation is, indeed, about getting things done. She began as an intern, was hired as an organizer, became a coordinator, and is now a national field director. Based in Los Angeles, Mejia oversees the federal-level effort to advocate for better working conditions for hundreds of thousands of farmworkers across the country. Though her role has changed, one thing has remained constant. "It ultimately boils down to the fundamentals you learn when you're an organizer," she says. "The ability to connect with people, the ability to empower and engage workers. Farmworkers are at the heart of what you do. It's about keeping them at the center."

Mejia grew up in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, the daughter of a white mother and Afro-Latino father. "We were always talking about politics and social justice issues," she says. As a Macalester student, she knew she wanted to work in the immigrant community. Supported in part by a Macalester Live It grant, she interned with the UFW in California's Central Valley, where she helped organize grape workers.

"I was shy and my Spanish was not great," Mejia remembers. But the organizers at UFW trained her well, teaching her how they as farmworkers had gone from not having a voice or fair working conditions to winning union contracts. By the end of the summer, she was able to stand in front of a crew of 70 workers and talk to them with ease. When she returned to Macalester in the fall, she brought this newfound passion and sense of confidence back to campus.

"I wanted to give back to UFW, who showed me that I could be a leader," Mejia says. With help from the Adelante! student org, she dedicated her senior year to fundraising and raising awareness. They raised enough money to bring UFW president Arturo S. Rodriguez to speak on campus in front of 500 students. Rodriguez hired her right out of college, and she's been working with UFW and its sister foundation ever since.

"We're a humble organization. Low-wage workers of various [immigration] statuses, predominantly undocumented, going up against a multimillion-dollar industry—that's a challenge. That said," she says, a smile spreading across her face, "we've been able to overcome that in remarkable ways."

UFW is no stranger to overcoming the odds. Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, the union's founders, won the first union contracts for farmworkers in the 1960s, when there was no federally protected right to unionize. More recently, UFW and the UFW Foundation won protection for farmworkers in the form of overtime pay, heat protections, and sick pay. "Our 'yes we can do it' attitude shines through time and time again," Mejia says.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges have only gotten steeper, making farmworkers even more vulnerable. Their workplaces often don't provide PPE or employ proper sanitation measures. Many farmworkers cannot access federal benefits due to their immigration status. Additionally, in the rural locations where farmworkers live, food banks have limited hours, and their long workdays make it impossible to access them. And when the pandemic hit, price gouging made food more expensive—the very food they are working long and hard hours to produce. Mejia quotes César Chávez: "It's ironic that those who till the soil, cultivate and harvest the fruits, vegetables, and other foods that fill your tables with abundance have nothing left for themselves."

In response, the UFW Foundation has partnered with World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit that provides emergency relief meals, to distribute food in rural farmworker communities throughout California. They've provided nearly 200,000 meals in the span of months. They're also distributing masks to workers in California and Washington state, conducting virtual town halls between members of Congress and farmworkers, and continuing their campaign for federal measures on legalization of immigrants, heat protections for outdoor workers, COVID-19 protections, and overtime pay.

These victories are, as Mejia says, remarkable. She glows with optimism, striking in a time when achieving change has felt incredibly daunting. Ask her what advice she has for students pondering careers at such an uncertain time—or for so many other people who are considering how to make a difference—and she answers with conviction.

"Follow your passion," she says. "Don't let anybody tell you that what you're interested in isn't valid or isn't going to lead to a career, because it will. It might take time, or you might go on multiple paths to end up where you're supposed to be, but don't give up. *Sí, se puede!*" M

Rachel Rostad '15 is a freelance writer based in St. Paul.

## 1940

**Marion King Bergstrom,** 101, died July 17, 2020. She volunteered with the Red Cross at a military hospital in Guam during World War II and worked as a secretary for the chief executive officer of Ansul Chemical Co.

## 1942

**Ruth Berlin Wille,** 98, died April 7, 2019, in Longmont, Colo. She taught high school and kindergarten, wrote for Portals of Prayer, and composed lyrics for musical plays. She also volunteered at the Fort Collins library, established an Older Adults Ministry, and taught English as a second language.

Her husband, **Warren Wille**, died Aug. 3, 2019, in Longmont. He was a B-29 bomber pilot in the Pacific during World War II. During his 59 years of ministry, Warren served as pastor of several Lutheran congregations in Colorado. He also conducted mountain searches with the Civil Air Patrol. After his formal ministry ended, he continued to teach Bible classes, provide pastoral care, and lead an occasional worship service at a senior living center. Ruth and Warren are survived by five children (including David Wille '70), 14 grandchildren, and 24 great-grandchildren.

## 1944

**Irene Fisher Fuller,** 97, of Salina, Kan., died Aug. 6, 2020. She was a homemaker and led a community water aerobics class until the age of 93. Fuller is survived by two daughters, seven grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Daryl E. "Bud" Lembke,** 98, died June 17, 2020, in Walnut Creek, Calif. He served as an Army radio operator during World War II before embarking on a career in journalism. During his 21 years with the *Los Angeles Times*, Lembke wrote about politics in Sacramento, Calif., covered the Bay Area, and reported on the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy in real time. After retiring from the *Times* in the 1980s, Lembke founded his own newspaper in Orange County, the *Dana Point Beacon.* He also worked as press secretary for a California state senator, published a newsletter on local government, and recounted his experiences in the war in his book *Ups and Downs in a Flying Fortress: Were Those Trips Necessary?* Lembke is survived by his wife, Mary, a daughter, and a grandson.

## 1946

**Ruth G. Hofmeister** died May 22, 2020, in Washington, D.C. She worked for the federal government and in the corporate world, and traveled to 89 countries.

## 1947

**Jean Hafermann Haemig** of St. Paul died May 26, 2020.

## 1950

**Elaine Oller Fesler** died June 2, 2020. She is survived by two daughters, a grandson, and two great-grandchildren.

**Robert C. Hoisington,** 92, of Shoreview, Minn., died Aug. 15, 2020. He served in the Army for three years as a math applications instructor, and later taught high school and coached track and cross country in Minneapolis for more than 30 years. Hoisington led his teams to seven state championships and is an inductee of several athletic halls of fame, including Macalester's. He also received Macalester's Distinguished Citizen Award in 2005. Hoisington is survived by three daughters, a son, 21 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, and a brother.

**Clarence S. Johnson,** 93, died Oct. 21, 2019, in St. Louis Park, Minn. He was a World War II Navy veteran and master architectural draftsman who designed and built his own home. Johnson also worked as assistant building manager at the Medical Arts Building in Minneapolis.

**George S. Lamb,** 92, of Seattle died June 7, 2020. During his long tenure as a professor at Western Washington University, he taught elementary education, supervised student teachers, and directed the Teacher Corps. He is survived by his wife, Carol McRae Lamb '50, a daughter, two sons, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

**Howard W. Nessel,** 95, of Stacy, Minn., died July 6, 2020. He served in the Navy in the Pacific during World War II, became an accountant, and retired as office manager with Oliver D. Billing and Associates. Nessel is survived by four daughters, a son, 19 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

**William H. Ringold,** 93, died June 3, 2020. He served in the Navy during World War II and worked for 3M for his entire career. Ringold is survived by two daughters, two sons, eight grandchildren, and a sister.

## 1951

**Helen Miska Clark,** 91, of Wichita, Kan., died Aug. 9, 2020. She worked as a medical technologist at Huron Regional Hospital and Tschetter & Hohm Clinic. Clark is survived by three sons and three grandchildren.

## 1952

**Norman G. Andersen,** 93, of Bloomington, Minn., died May 23, 2020. He served in the Army Air Force Reserve and was called into active duty in 1945. During his 44 years with Grief Brothers, Andersen worked in management, sales, marketing, package development, and national accounts. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, two children, and a sister.

**Betty Baumgaertner Bullis,** 89, died April 14, 2020. She is survived by a daughter and a son.

**Sally Watkins Dennis,** 90, died April 26, 2020. After earning a nursing degree, Watkins worked for four years for the U.S. Public Health Service in Zuni and Navajo hospitals. With her husband, Frank, she served with The Evangelical Alliance Mission in Taiwan for 33 years and founded a hospital that served aboriginal patients in Taitung. Watkins is survived by five children, 11 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

## 1953

**Helen Bloom Cool,** 89, died July 4, 2020. She founded Cool Acres Farm in Lakeland, Minn. Cool is survived by a daughter, two grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, a sister, and a brother.

**Carole Frandsen Driver,** 87, of Richmond, R.I., died May 29, 2020. After teaching kindergarten, she worked as an elementary school librarian from 1973 until her retirement in 1992. Driver is survived by her husband, Rod, a daughter, two sons, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and a sister.

**John R. Schue,** 88, of Inver Grove Heights, Minn., died Aug. 24, 2020. After earning a PhD at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he taught at Oberlin College for three years before returning to Macalester, where he was professor of mathematics from 1962 to 1999. He received Macalester's Thomas Jefferson Award for outstanding contributions to undergraduate education in 1989. Schue is survived by his wife, Barbara James Schue '57, a daughter, three sons (including Paul Schue '90), 12 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

## 1954

**Marilyn Ellis Johnson,** 87, of Minneapolis died July 14, 2020. She worked as a medical technologist and was later employed by Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi and her son's startup company, Rocket Arrowheads. Johnson is survived by a daughter, two sons, and eight grandchildren.

**Marjorie Ensley Martin** died July 1, 2020, in Tucson, Ariz., where she taught for many years. She is survived by two daughters, a son, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

**Helen Nelson Wettlaufer,** 88, of Park Rapids, Minn., died May 24, 2020. She was a second-grade teacher in St. Paul and Robbinsdale, Minn., and taught special education at all grade levels in Osseo, Minn. Wettlaufer is survived by two daughters, three grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

## 1955

**Fred R. Garofalo,** 89, of St. Paul died June 4, 2020. He retired in 1996 after 40 years with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Garofalo is survived by his wife, Maria, two daughters, two sons (including Stan Garofalo '86), 11 grandchildren, and brother Silvano Garofalo '59.

**Arlen M. Olson,** 86, died June 29, 2020. He served in the Navy and worked for Investors Diversified Services before becoming a financial planner. Olson is survived by two daughters, a son, four grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

**Marjorie Kiel Persons,** 88, died Aug. 28, 2019, in Elizabethton, Tenn. She taught music at a private oil camp school in Aruba and at a parochial school in New Jersey. She also taught literature, history, and music to missionary children in Oaxaca, Mexico, and developed Classical Magic, a music appreciation program used by teachers and home schoolers across the country. Persons is survived by three daughters, six grandchildren, a sister, and two brothers.

## 1957

**Andrew R. Benjamin,** 85, of Mankato, Minn., died June 30, 2020. He served in the Army and worked for H.B. Fuller Co. for 35 years. Benjamin is survived by his wife, Audrey DeLong Benjamin '58, two daughters, two sons, eight grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother.

**James E. Bransford,** 89, died July 31, 2020. He served in the Korean War and pursued a career in chemistry. He was a founding member of African American Family Services, worked as a chemical dependency counselor, and retired from the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office as a dispositional advisor. Bransford is survived by his wife, Barbara, two daughters, seven grandchildren, numerous great-grandchildren, and three sisters.

**Lyn Arey Pewitt,** 84, died July 2, 2020, in Spring Hill, Tenn. She was a founding member of her local community theater, the Pull-Tight Players, and was known on local radio as "Lyn the News Hen." Pewitt had four children, eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother.

**John E. Stuckmayer,** 85, of Mendota Heights, Minn., died June 22, 2020. He wrote three memoirs and a novel based on his experiences traveling around the country and the world for more than 20 years. After returning to Minnesota, he worked as a plumber. Stuckmayer is survived by his wife, Jean Haskell.

**Cleone Wallin Swanberg,** 84, died June 1, 2020. She is survived by three sons, eight grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and a brother.

## 1959

**Audrey Dravland Franson,** 83, died July 12, 2020. She spent 33 years assisting her husband, Charles, in his ministry with the Baptist General Conference by playing piano during worship and serving in women's ministries and children's programs at churches in Minnesota, South Dakota, Washington, and Alaska. Franson also went on mission trips to Russia and Argentina. She is survived by three daughters, five grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

## 1960

**Richard A. Carlson,** 87, of Navarre, Minn., died June 5, 2020. He was a combat veteran of the Korean War and worked as an information technology executive with several companies in the Twin Cities. Carlson is survived by two daughters, two sons, and a sister.

## 1961

**Kathryn Peterson Pedersen,** 81, died Aug. 5, 2020, in St. Paul. She sewed and donated many hats and quilts for newborns and donated school kits and personal hygiene kits for international distribution by Lutheran World Relief. Pedersen also endowed a scholarship for Macalester students who, like her, were from rural Minnesota and the first members of their families to attend college. She is survived by three children, five granddaughters, three sisters, and a brother.

## 1962

**Marlene J. Bauman,** 86, of Northfield, Minn., died June 15, 2020. She and her husband, Philip, did missionary work in Hong Kong for 33 years, led weekend workshops around the world with United Marriage Encounter, and served as directors of the Chinese Hospitality Center at the University of Minnesota. Bauman is survived by her husband, five children, 17 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren.

**Sandra Groth Bloomquist,** 80, died July 19, 2020, in Alexandria, Minn. She taught kindergarten for a year in Ely, Minn. Bloomquist is survived by her husband, Karl, two daughters, a son, a grandson, a sister, and a brother.

## 1963

**Siah Armajani,** 80, died Aug. 27, 2020, in Minneapolis. Embarking on a career in sculpture and public art in the early 1960s, Armajani created works that explored American vernacular architecture and were intended to foster public engagement. His work was informed by his interest in computing and engineering and was featured in many major exhibitions around the world, including the Venice Biennale, the Whitney Biennial, and the Carnegie International in Pittsburgh. He designed public gazebos, lecture rooms, reading rooms, and the Olympic flame cauldron for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. Perhaps his most iconic work is the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge, a pedestrian overpass in Minneapolis linking Loring Park to the sculpture garden at Walker Art Center. Armajani received Macalester's Distinguished Citizen award in 1982. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Bauer Armajani '63.

**Patricia Pool Merrill,** 78, of Rochester, Minn., died Aug. 3, 2020. She is survived by her husband, Robert, three children, a grandson, and three sisters.

## 1965

**Robert T. Johnson,** 77, of Bloomington, Minn., died June 6, 2020. He is survived by two daughters, four grandchildren, and sister Kathleen Johnson DeBeer '55.

## 1966

**Linda Kay Johnson,** 76, of Palm Desert, Calif., died Aug. 12, 2020. During her career as a nurse, she worked at Eisenhower Medical Center for many years and oversaw the nursing lab at College of the Desert. Johnson is survived by her husband, Paul Voth, a son, three grandchildren, and a brother.

## 1968

**David J. Wedum,** 75, of Glenwood, Minn., died July 2, 2020. He worked as an account executive, a restaurant and shopping center manager, and a resort operations manager before returning to oversee his family business, the Glenwood Lumber Company. Wedum is survived by a daughter, a son, and two grandchildren.

# // OTHER LOSSES

**Bonnie B. Alexander,** a technology specialist at Macalester, died June 3, 2020, in St. Paul. She was 76. While at Macalester, Alexander created information technology tutorials and developed friendships with students that lasted well into her retirement, including monthly group brunches. "Bonnie liked being with people she could learn with and from," says Deb Roepke '93. "She saw what was unique about each of us, and she pushed us to use our special gifts to be better and do more than we ourselves believed we could." She also worked as a counselor in a residential rehabilitation facility and transcribed braille for the State of Minnesota. She is survived by two sisters.

Macalester Professor of Philosophy **Karen J. Warren** of Minneapolis died Aug. 21, 2020, at the age of 72. She taught at Macalester from 1985 to 2013. A pioneer in the field of ecofeminism and a self-described "street philosopher," Warren taught and shared her work with nonacademic audiences in elementary and secondary schools, prison systems, and nonprofit and civic groups. She was the author or co-author of eight books, including *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters*. Warren received a Teaching Excellence Honor from the American Philosophical Association in 1997, as well as Macalester's Excellence in Teaching Award in 1996 and Educator of the Year Award in 2000. Since receiving a diagnosis of multiple system atrophy in 2016, Warren advocated for end-of-life options for the terminally ill. She is survived by her daughter, Cortney Warren '00, two grandchildren, two sisters, and a brother.

## 1969

**Bruce H. Thomsen,** 72, of West St. Paul, Minn., died June 24, 2020. He worked as a tax auditor for the Minnesota Department of Revenue and played with the 451st Army Reserve Band. Thomsen is survived by two brothers (including twin brother Paul Thomsen '69).

## 1970

**Ted Obler,** 72, died Aug. 10, 2020. He taught high school health and physical education for 30 years in Madison, Wis., and coached hockey and football. Obler is survived by two sons, two grandchildren, and a sister.

**Joyce K. Takekawa,** 71, of Shakopee, Minn., died March 13, 2020. She is survived by two sisters and a brother.

## 1974

**Judith Person McCall,** 68, died July 21, 2020. With her husband, Todd McCall '82, she led Celtic dancing classes, workshops, and performance groups in the Twin Cities and Madison, Wis. She also worked as a travel counselor at the Nova Scotia Visitor Centre and taught classes in Scottish, English, and Celtic dancing at Tantramar Seniors' College in New Brunswick, Canada. McCall is survived by her husband, a sister, and a brother.

## 1976

**James Vculek,** 67, died recently in Paris. In addition to working as principal attorney editor at Thomson Reuters for 27 years, Vculek also ran Partizan Theater, which produced seven of his plays, and Partizan Pictures, a film production company. His film *Two Harbors* was screened at 25 film festivals around the world and was broadcast on New York public television. Vculek also founded the klezmer band Prague 24.

## 1984

**Jesus Preciado,** 61, died June 4, 2020. He served in the Army National Guard and was employed by the IRS. Preciado is survived by his wife, Gina Maltese-Preciado, a daughter, a son, his parents, three sisters, and a brother.

## 1989

**Karen E. Dvorak,** 55, of White Bear Township, Minn., died July 2, 2020. She helped build houses in India and Guatemala with Habitat for Humanity. Dvorak is survived by her mother and a brother.

## 1999

**Patrick Quint,** 43, of Kasson, Minn., died June 6, 2020. He worked as a researcher at the Mayo Clinic for 12 years. Quint is survived by his wife, Ingvild Herfindahl '99, a daughter, two sons, his parents, a sister, and a brother.

## 2002

**Lindsay Walsh Norton,** 40, of St. Paul died Aug. 21, 2020. She worked in marketing with Solatube and Transamerica, and was also a Spin and fitness instructor. Norton is survived by her husband, Brad, a son, her mother and father, a grandmother, two sisters, and three brothers.


# THE HISPANIC HOUSE

The Mac Archives staff members have found what they believe are the collection's only images of the Hispanic House, established in the early 1970s at 1662 Princeton Ave. But no details accompanied the photos, and college archivist Ellen Holt-Werle hopes *Macalester Today* readers can help expand what we know about this chapter in the college's history, which includes the EEO program, Black House, and the American Indian Center.

**Share your stories: archives@macalester.edu**
**Instagram: @macalesterarchives**

COURTESY OF MACALESTER COLLEGE ARCHIVES

MACALESTER FUND

# INVEST IN HOPE FOR ALL MACALESTER STUDENTS.

The inequities brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic and civil rights crisis have magnified how much we need to support Macalester students right now. By making a gift to the Macalester Fund, you can help us shape what's next for the college and support the Macalester graduates who will transform our college, our communities, our country, and our world.

## WE HEARD YOU.

Many of you have told us that you want to direct your giving to the needs you are most passionate about. Now you may direct your Macalester Fund gift to any of these areas:

### FINANCIAL AID

Support Macalester's extraordinary commitment to financial aid, which allows us to provide students of all economic backgrounds access to a Macalester education.

### PROGRAM SUPPORT

Provide students with opportunities for growth outside the classroom—from arts performances to career development workshops to maker lessons in the Idea Lab—that make the Macalester experience special.

### FACULTY SUPPORT

Sustain the incredible education that is one of the cornerstones of Macalester's mission, including student-faculty research, curricular development, and the flexibility to pilot new projects and academic initiatives.

### STUDENT EMERGENCY AID

Support Macalester students experiencing unanticipated financial hardships related to technology and academic supply needs, emergency travel, medical expenses, and more. These funds are administered through Macalester's Emergency Aid Program.

MAC ATHLETICS

### ATHLETICS

Help Macalester student-athletes build toward excellence with expanded efforts to support the whole athlete through nutrition and counseling services, student-athlete leadership development, expanded recruitment, and more.

### RACIAL EQUITY SUPPORT

Support Macalester's work toward a more just and equitable campus and world. These funds are granted to projects through an application process open to students, faculty, and staff members.

### SUPPORT IT ALL

Support everything you love about Macalester and allow Macalester to continue to strive toward living our values and educating tomorrow's leaders.

Make a gift by visiting **macalester.edu/giving** or calling **866-814-0640**.

MACALESTER COLLEGE

1600 Grand Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105-1899

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 1339
Madison, WI

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NORTH STAR AERIAL

**A bird's-eye view of campus as the leaves turn**