

## Macalester Receives \$354,500 Mellon Grant for Student Fellowships

**St. Paul, Minn.** - Macalester College has received a \$354,500 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in New York to continue its Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) Program through the 2014-2015 academic year. Now in its twelfth year at Macalester, MMUF aims to reduce the serious underrepresentation of minorities in the faculty ranks of institutions of higher learning by encouraging minority students to earn PhDs.

Since the program's inception in 1988, approximately 3,750 undergraduates have been selected as Mellon Fellows. Approximately 60 percent of Mellon Mays Fellows undertake graduate degrees after earning their undergraduate degrees, with one third of these directly entering PhD programs.

"As a Mellon Fellow, I was inducted into a community that was not just a social community of people of color within a small liberal arts college, but a larger intellectual community that is continually invested in critically thinking about the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality," said former MMUF fellow and Macalester graduate Kemi Adeyemi who is currently a graduate student in Performance Studies at Northwestern University. "Mellon was critical to my development as a scholar. Most importantly, through the program, I was taught how to use scholarship in order to think for myself. In short, Mellon was single-handedly my best preparation for the graduate school environment."

The cornerstone of the Macalester program remains the interaction between fellows and their faculty mentors. Since 2000, the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program at Macalester has helped 60 students of color, of whom nearly half have enrolled in graduate programs.

"The work we're doing increases the pipeline of scholars in the academy, and the fact that the MMUF grant endorses and is supportive of Macalester's efforts is very satisfying," Jane Rhodes, director of Macalester's Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program, Dean for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and professor of American Studies. "Although Macalester's fellows are across the U.S. shaping and influencing the academy, this is a long-term project that requires resources and commitment. There's still much work to be done to diversify higher education."

The renewed program at Macalester will: 1) emphasize faculty mentorships; 2) more fully nurture the intellectual cohort formed by the Mellon fellows; and 3) provide additional opportunities for engagement with the wider intellectual community.

At the University of Southern California, Macalester alumnus Shana Redmond is an assistant professor of American Studies and Ethnicity. "Being a Mellon Fellow meant that I was being taken seriously as a budding scholar," Redmond said. "This fellowship and the mentorship that I received gave me permission to do and say things above and beyond what I previously had imagined doing or saying. It impacted the quality of thinking and writing that I accomplished as a young student, the graduate programs that I was accepted into, and the networks that I was able to mobilize during and after graduate school."

MMUF has been highly successful. To date, over 400 fellows have earned their PhDs and are now teaching around the country, with an additional 645 PhDs in progress. Forty-five fellows achieved tenure. Over 1000 fellows are currently completing graduate study, and MMUF continues to attract the best and the brightest undergraduates.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 2,035

students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism and civic engagement. Learn more at [macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu) (<http://www.macalester.edu/>).

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