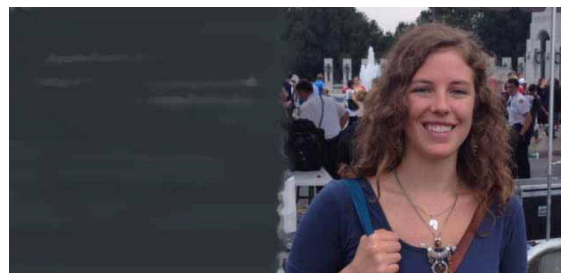


Recent alumnae receives national essay award

St. Paul, Minn. – Rachel Mueller, a 2013 Macalester graduate from Glenwood Springs, Colo., has won the 2013 national Nancy "Penny" Schwartz Undergraduate Essay Award from the Association for Africanist Anthropology (AfAA), a sub-section of the American Anthropological Association. The prize is awarded to the best undergraduate paper in Africanist anthropology.



AfAA chose her submission, "The Spirits are My Neighbors: Women and the Rab Cult in Dakar, Senegal," based of the strength of her work which "incorporated in-depth fieldwork within the framework of Africanist anthropology.

"Receiving this award is a sign that I'm focusing my energy in the right direction and is a seal of approval of my scholarship," said Mueller. "It's incredibly valuable to be recognized by the AfAA, a group whose mission is of personal interest to me. This award has exposed me to a new network of people interested in the same subjects as myself, and I'm proud to be associated with them."



The Nancy "Penny" Schwartz Undergraduate Essay Award is now in its seventh year. Each year, the committee receives a wide range of submissions from undergraduate programs in the Americas, Europe, and beyond.

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AfAA choose Mueller's winning essay based on the following criteria:

1. Originality of scholarship, creativity of insight, and quality of writing. A well-argued and innovative perspective on a current issue of concern to Africanist and African diaspora scholarship or to the issues facing Africa more generally.
2. Clear potential for supporting future research at the graduate level or beyond. Special consideration will be given to undergraduates planning to pursue a career in anthropology or in service and education on the African continent.
3. Original research involving primary materials or fieldwork is useful, but not essential for consideration.

For her future, Mueller wants to continue pursuing research in similar areas through a PhD program in Anthropology and African Studies. She plans to go to the award ceremony this November in Chicago to receive her prize of \$250.

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/>).

September 4 2013

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