

## Sociology student awarded a top place in national competition

**St. Paul, Minn.** – Macalester senior Mara Aussendorf of Bainbridge Island, Wash., has won third place in the 2014 national Alpha Kappa Delta Undergraduate Paper Competition with her paper titled “*The Birdhouse and the Bee Hive: Parents’ Navigation of Successful Sexual Socialization.*” Alpha Kappa Delta, the honors society for sociology, sponsors the annual undergraduate paper competition that receives entries from across the country. This award marks the fourth consecutive year that Macalester sociology majors have earned the top prizes from Alpha Kappa Delta.

In February, Aussendorf won third place for the same paper at the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) 51st Annual Student Paper Competition.

In her paper, Aussendorf addresses parents’ navigation of a culture filled with mixed messages about sex, which is seen both as a liberating experience of self-actualization and as a source of danger. Drawing on interviews with parents about how they understand successful socialization of their children, the paper reveals parents navigating a tension between cultivating personal hopes for their children’s sexualities and protecting them from potential sexual abuse. This difficulty encourages parents to construct the home environment in relation to societal expectations. To this end, social aspects of children’s sexualities are often constructed in line with the normative perspective that – with the reality of pedophilia – children should be discouraged from bodily pleasures, making it hard for parents to promote confident expressions of their sexuality.

By virtue of her award, Aussendorf is automatically eligible to participate in the American Sociology Association Honors program that runs in conjunction with the Association’s Annual Meeting. Both the presentation of the awards and the honors program will take place in San Francisco later this year. In addition to support for travel expenses and registration fees, Aussendorf will receive a cash prize with her award.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 2,011 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism, and civic engagement. Learn more at [maclester.edu](http://www.maclester.edu/) (<http://www.maclester.edu/>)

April 10 2014

- [About Macalester \(http://www.maclester.edu/about/\)](http://www.maclester.edu/about/)
- [Academics \(http://www.maclester.edu/academics/\)](http://www.maclester.edu/academics/)



[Download \(//d2ihvqrbsd9p9p.cloudfront.net/contentAsset/raw-data/5aa247b1-7c26-4f21-b000-66ec3ba3ee43/image1\)](http://d2ihvqrbsd9p9p.cloudfront.net/contentAsset/raw-data/5aa247b1-7c26-4f21-b000-66ec3ba3ee43/image1)

- [Admissions & Financial Aid \(http://www.macalester.edu/admissions/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/admissions/)
- [Life at Mac \(http://www.macalester.edu/lifeatmac/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/lifeatmac/)
- [Support Mac \(http://www.macalester.edu/supportmac/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/supportmac/)