Karin Aguilar-San Juan is associate professor of American studies at Macalester College. An urban sociologist, she publishes and teaches about community and identity among Asian Americans, as well as courses on racial inequality and race-based social movements. She is a Next Generation Leadership Fellow (a program sponsored by New York University’s Wagner School of Public Policy).

Westenley Alcenat is a senior with a double major in history and political science. His talk will explore the Obama presidency and Obama’s effort to transform the nation’s civic landscape through an ambitious social agenda.

Callie Thuma is a senior with an American studies major and a geography minor. She will present examples of local and national leaders using the arts and oral history to creatively and collectively address class and race-based inequities in the spirit of Obama’s community organizing background.

Iterations
2007 Meditations on Global Citizenship
2008 The Environment, Citizenship, and the Public Good
2009 Religion in the Public Square
The Institute for Global Citizenship presents:

Civic Leadership in the Age of Obama

THURSDAY, APRIL 8

6:30–6:40 p.m. Welcome
Karin Trail-Johnson, Associate Dean Institute for Global Citizenship

6:40–7:00 p.m. The Pursuit of Something New: Lessons from the Black Box Theater of Central High School
Callie Thuma ’10

7:00–7:20 p.m. Revamping the Welfare State? Obama and the Challenge of American Politics
Wes Alcenat ’10

7:20–7:45 p.m. Questions and Comments
Facilitated by Julie Dolan, Associate Professor and Chair of the Political Science Department

7:45–8:00 p.m. Refreshment Break

8:00–8:40 p.m. Keynote Address
Post-Racial Leadership: Radicalized Mass Incarceration and President Obama
Ian Haney López, John H. Boalt Professor of Law University of California, Berkeley

8:40–8:55 p.m. Faculty Response
Karin Aguilar-San Juan, Associate Professor of American Studies

8:55–9:05 p.m. Response to Student and Faculty Presentations
Professor Haney

9:05–9:30 p.m. Questions and Comments
Facilitated by Professor Dolan

9:30–9:40 p.m. Closing Remarks
Ahmed I. Samatar, Dean Institute for Global Citizenship

The Annual Civic Forum puts a high priority on showcasing student scholarship offered through commissioned papers. Also central to the proceedings is a keynote address, delivered by a noted scholar or public intellectual, with response from a Macalester faculty member.

Leadership is among the oldest and most recurring features in the making of associational life. From learned, artistic, and scientific groups, to communal, religious, business, labor, and sports communities, to all forms of political organizations, leadership has always been one of the pivotal items in effective collective action. Perhaps this is more so in periods of societal turbulences. The United States of America finds itself in the thicket of major challenges that range from the environment, energy, and immigration to economic well-being and health-care for its citizens. The arrival of the first African American president opens up a new space for conversation about civic life, leadership, and change. This year’s Macalester Civic Forum is an invitation to interrogate the nature and promise of this historic moment.

Ian F. Haney López
John H. Boalt Professor of Law
University of California, Berkeley

Haney López teaches and writes in the area of race and constitutional law. He has published groundbreaking books on the social and legal construction of race. His current research examines the emergence and operation of “colorblindness” in U.S. constitutional law as an indicator of a new racial ideology aimed at legitimating and preserving the racial status quo.