Greetings from the McNair Scholars Staff

This issue will provide you with a birds-eye review of the McNair Scholars experience throughout 2013. The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, known at the University of Delaware as the McNair Scholars Program, is one of eight federally-funded national TRIO programs.

Housed in the Undergraduate Research and Experiential Learning (UREL) unit, the McNair and University Undergraduate Scholars (UUS) Programs aim to prepare talented low-income, first-generation, and under-represented students toward successful graduate school matriculation and attainment of a doctoral degree. The McNair Scholars Program has been at the University of Delaware since 1999.

The McNair family includes 25 diverse awarded McNair scholars per year, 5 University Undergraduate Scholars, dedicated faculty mentors, McNair Alumni Ambassadors, an advisory board, the 2013 undergraduate research faculty director (Dr. Lynnette Overby), a doctoral graduate assistant (Natalie Cook), a program coordinator (Tiffany Scott), and a program director (Dr. Kimberly Saunders).

Meet the 2013 awarded scholars and graduates in this issue. As you turn the pages you will read scholar reflections, pre-view experiential pictures, learn about graduate school preparation seminars, scan featured research conferences, find out who won faculty mentor awards, and get a glimpse of our McNair Alumni in spotlight.

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“Being a McNair scholar means being a leader, but being willing to let others lead as well. This program has prepared me for entering the world after graduation.” - Neraliz Diaz, Senior

We are the Future of Academia

To be a McNair scholar is to be nominated the next generation of underrepresented individuals to impact the world of academia. It’s truly an honor to be a part of a cohort of minority scholars. McNair has shown me the vast potential I have to achieve a doctoral degree in my field. It has also shown me the importance of minority representation in STEM fields. I hope that McNair will continue to provide me opportunities to grow as a researcher and as a student. Others should apply to McNair to join the mission of putting minority students in higher positions in society. Since McNair made me realize my potential, it is important to give others that opportunity as well.

- Darren Agboh, Senior

Being a McNair Scholar means being motivated and determined to excel in scholarship, professionalism, and contributing to your community. I have benefitted from McNair by learning how to be best prepared for graduate studies through workshops, research, and mentorship. - Tyler Sharp, Senior

McNair Scholars Has Helped Me to Grow

Being a McNair scholar has in many ways helped me grow as an individual. I have developed interpersonal skills, learned to deal with multiple responsibilities, and not feel overwhelmed. The McNair Scholars Program has exposed me to opportunities I would have otherwise not have had the chance to experience. I have received guidance and advice when I most needed it and the staff have confronted and given me support when I felt I could not do it any more. It would be a privilege to anyone to be a McNair scholar. The guidance, opportunities, friends, support, and most importantly to walk through the application and preparation for professional or graduate school is priceless! This experience has been incredible!

- Irene Rhobi Marwa, Senior
...Reflections from Our Current Scholars

“Being a McNair Scholar means that you are committed to research and bettering yourself as a scholar. The McNair Scholars program has done more for me than I could have ever expected.”  - Jordan Barnada, Junior

McNair Scholars has opened my eyes to many great opportunities. Through McNair, I have been exposed to some very intelligent and respectable individuals whom I admire, and from whom I have learned some valuable lessons.

-Edna Ofori, Senior

Being a McNair Scholar means always going 110% into anything that I do. It means hope for my future, faith that others have in me and my ability to be GREAT! This program has benefitted me in the technical ways by teaching me how to write a resume, apply to graduate school, conduct and synthesize research, communicate with faculty, and manage my time. It has also benefitted me in much more meaningful ways. McNair has given me a family, a support system that always has my back, my front, and my sides. I never feel like I have to go through any struggle, whether personal, professional, or academic, alone. I hope to keep the connections I have made through the program strong.

Others should apply to McNair because it is a unique opportunity to challenge yourself academically and socially. You would also have a wonderful opportunity to prepare for graduate school. Most of all, however, you would become part of a family that will encourage and support you on your endeavors to success.

-Binta Bah, Senior

McNair Has Helped Me Become a Researcher

It has been a pleasure being a McNair scholar for the past two years. I have gained so much that has helped me to grow as an academic and future professional. Since I have gained so much experience in research and working with different faculty mentors. This year, I chose to do my own research project, which really gave me insight into what it takes to get a research project off of the ground and turn it into something of value. This Winter Session I am continuing with my project and I am so excited to work with my faculty mentor again to get my research published. Dr. Galloway has been an excellent mentor and his encouragement and constant positive outlook helps to keep me motivated and focused. Aside from the academic side of things, I truly appreciate my McNair family for all the love, support, and fun experiences. I have made memories with all of the scholars that I will cherish forever.

-Arianna Morton, Senior
2013 Stats

- McNair Scholars Staff Planning Retreat
- Reviewed prospective scholar applications
- McNair Alumni Mentor Matching

WINTER 2013

- Welcome Back & Senior Salute
- Dr. Saunders received the Louis L. Redding Diversity Award
- Community Outreach at Mount Pleasant High School
- Selection of new McNair scholars and faculty mentors
- Faculty Mentor orientation and new scholar pre-orientation
- Colonial Academic Alliance Undergraduate Research Conference
- 19 McNair seniors graduated from UD

SPRING 2013

- McNair Scholars Summer Research Institute
- Team-building adventure
- Graduate school seminar series
- GRE exam preparation course
- Service and Cultural project at the Wilmington Jazz Festival
- Community Outreach with Upward Bound of DTCC-Wilmington
- Mini Summer Graduate School Fair and Panel
- 10 scholars submitted applications to begin senior theses
- Undergraduate Research and Service Celebratory Symposium

SUMMER 2013

- National McNair Scholars Research Competition and Graduate School Fair
- Open House and Recruitment
- Graduate School Visits and Research Conferences
- Weebly e-Portfolio competition
- End-of-semester Study Break event
- Débuted The McNair Weekly newsletter

FALL 2013

- McNair Scholars Staff Planning Retreat
- Reviewed prospective scholar applications
- McNair Alumni Mentor Matching
Scholars participate in national research conferences:

- “Posters on the Green” at Legislative Hall, Dover
- Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS), Nashville
- International Society for Developmental Psychobiology (ISDP), San Diego
- Colonial Academic Alliance (CAA) Undergraduate Research Conference, Newark
- Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) Conference, Chicago
- Leadership Alliance Symposium, Connecticut
- Undergraduate Research and Service Celebratory Symposium, Newark
- Regional Undergraduate Student Research Conference, Wilmington
Our Current Scholars

Name: Oluwatimilehin Adeyemo
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Human Services
Mentor: Dr. Mia Papas
Research Project: Understanding Barriers to Care: A Review of Disability Services in Delaware

Name: Darren Agboh
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Psychology
Mentor: Dr. Samuel Gaertner
Research Project: An Invitation to Friendship as a Method of Reducing Bias

Name: Stanley Terrell Anderson II
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Mechanical Engineering
Mentor: Dr. Ajay Prasad

Name: Binta Bah
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Women and Gender Studies
Mentor: Dr. Caroll Izard
Research Project: Factors Influencing Achievement amongst Immigrant College Students

Name: Rossiny Beaucejour
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Mechanical Engineering
Mentor: Dr. Erik Thostenson
Research Project: Locally Patterned Carbon Nanotubes for in situ Sensing of Strain and Cracks in Composites Materials

Name: Ashli Bottino
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Physical Therapy
Mentor: Dr. Tasos Karakostas
Research Project: Foot Pressure in Children with Valgus Foot Deformity

Name: Alexandra Davis
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Urban Affairs & Public Policy
Mentor: Dr. Saunders
Research Project: Harnessing Entrepreneurial Potential in South Africa's Townships as a Catalyst for Inclusive Growth: A Case

Name: Neraliz Diaz
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Sociology/Criminal Justice
Mentor: Dr. Yasser Payne
Research Project: Prisoner Reentry Programs: Attitudes and Experiences among Street Life Oriented Black Men

Name: Omar Durán
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Spanish Studies/Art History
Mentor: Dr. Monica Dominguez-Torres
Research Project: Observing Invisible Corpses: Gender and Violence in Teresa Margolles’s “Embroidered Fabric”

Name: D’Janna Hamilton
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Women and Gender Studies
Mentor: Dr. Margaret Stetz
Research Project: A Celebration of Culture: Women’s Carnival Dress in St. Vincent
Our Current Scholars

Name: Arpita Mandal
Class Standing: Senior
Major: English Education
Mentor: Dr. Michael Cotsell
Research Project: Victims of ‘Honor’ Tradition

Name: Irene Rhobi Marwa
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Biotechnology
Mentor: Dr. Robert Sikes
Research Project: Derived Factor(s) Inducing Prostate Cancer Cell Death

Name: Kaitlin Mitchell
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Criminal Justice
Mentor: Dr. Ruth Fleury-Steiner
Research Project: Knowledge of Reproductive Coercion Among Delaware’s Health Professionals

Name: Arianna Morton
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Medical Laboratory Sciences
Mentor: Dr. Barret Michalec
Research Project: Exploring How Skin Color Is Represented In Teaching Materials And How It Impacts Physician Perspectives On Certain Skin Conditions

Name: N’Kosi Oates
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Political Science/Communications
Mentor: Dr. Robert Y. Shapiro
Research Project: Neighborhood Poverty and Political Participation: Survey Evidence from Black Neighborhoods in Six Cities

Name: Edna Ofori
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Medical Laboratory Sciences
Mentor: Dr. Arun Kumar
Research Project: In Vitro Co-Culture of MCF-7 Cells and Preadipocytes to Observe Cell Proliferation

Name: Nicole Seymour
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Political Science/Public Policy
Mentor: Dr. Jerome Lewis
Research Project: The Car-Free Guide: An Outcome of the Assessment of Transit-Friendliness in the City of Newark, Delaware

Name: Tyler Sharp
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Psychology
Mentor: Dr. Nicole Shelton
Research Project: Love Prejudice: An Underestimated Social Problem

Name: Lakeisha Smith
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Psychology
Mentor: Dr. Cynthia Robbins
Research Project: Mediating the Effects of Parental Incarceration; Does the Source of Support Alter Behavioral Outcomes?

Name: Charris Allen
Class Standing: Senior
Major: Exercise Science
Mentor: Dr. Megan Wenner
Research Project: ET-B responses in Premenopausal and Postmenopausal Women
Our Current Scholars (Continued)

Name: Akilah Alleyne  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Human Services  
**Mentor:** Dr. Chrysanthi Leon  
**Research Project:** Specialized Court Analysis (Mental Health and Prostitution Courts)

Name: Jordan Barnada  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Psychology  
**Mentor:** Dr. Julie Hubbard  
**Research Project:** Gender Differences in and Gender Moderation of Peer Victimization and Its Correlates

Name: Nafissatou Dicko  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Criminal Justice  
**Mentor:** Dr. Susan Miller  
**Research Project:** After the Relationship Ends: Post-Termination Issues Faced by Battered Women with Children

Name: Melany Justice  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Public Policy  
**Mentor:** Dr. Theodore Davis  
**Research Project:** Addressing the Educational Attainment Gap in Delaware: African-Americans Dropping Out

Name: Joseph Kerridge  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Chemical Engineering  
**Mentor:** Dr. Julia Maresca  
**Research Project:** Microbial Degradation of Asphalt

Name: Shyanne Miller  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Wildlife Conservation  
**Mentor:** Jacob Bowman  
**Research Project:** Does Calvin Klein’s “Obsession” for Men Perfume Effect the Detection of Mesocarnivores?

Name: Jocelyn Moore  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Organizational and Community Leadership  
**Mentor:** Dr. Anthony Middlebrooks  
**Research Project:** Youth Group Leadership

Name: Lucero Pizano  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Economics  
**Mentor:** Dr. Farley Grubb  
**Research Project:** Statistical Properties of Colonial New Jersey’s Monetary System from 1709 to 1775

Name: Adam Ramsaran  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Neuroscience  
**Mentor:** Dr. Mark Stanton  
**Research Project:** Ontogeny of Object-in-Context Learning in the Rat

Name: Stacey Wallace  
**Class Standing:** Junior  
**Major:** Chemical Engineering  
**Mentor:** Dr. Nii Attoh-Okine  
**Research Project:** Making Sense of Large Scale Cancer Data Using Continuous Bayesian Networks
Four Seniors Conducted Research Away from UD

**Tyler Sharp Researched “Love Prejudice: An Underestimated Social Problem” at Princeton University**

I was accepted into the Princeton Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (PSURE) by applying through the Leadership Alliance Program. The PSURE program funded my summer experience. I had the privilege of working under the mentorship of Dr. Nicole Shelton in the psychology department. I developed a research idea that involves an alternative approach to improving intergroup relations that suggested finding out ways to reduce love prejudice (pro-ingroup orientation) in order to positively influence how we perceive outgroup members. I focused on how love prejudice presents itself through language by looking at the linguistic intergroup bias model. Through this experience, I learned excellent presentation and professional skills, knowledge about the graduate admissions process, and new cultural information through discussions and trips. Besides Princeton’s beautiful campus, the program staff made the program the most unique and memorable. Other scholars should apply because they will receive great benefits unlike most summer research programs, such as extensive GRE preparation, presentation practice, and knowledge of the ins and outs of life in academia. There is a director, 2 graduate students and a postdoctoral fellow working with you each step of the way. Princeton has a beautiful campus and the people and town are so enchanting that you are bound to be inspired!

**N’Kosi Oates Studied “Neighborhood Poverty and Political Participation: Survey Evidence from Black Neighborhoods in Six Cities” at Columbia University**

I was selected as a fellow in the Leadership Alliance Summer Research Program at the Columbia Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Conducted under the mentorship of Dr. Robert Y. Shapiro and Dr. Dorian T. Warren, my project entitled, “Neighborhood Poverty and Political Participation: Survey Evidence from Black Neighborhoods in Six Cities,” explores the relationship between neighborhood poverty and African American political participation in the 2008 presidential election. The skills and knowledge I gained was beyond belief. My experience was in many ways a graduate-level research. I learned various quantitative methods such as regressions that typically expose to graduate students. Undertaking research at another institution is extremely beneficial. One of the greatest strengths is that one has the opportunity to expand their collegiate network. To this day I communicate with some of my fellows, grad students and mentors.

**Ashli Bottino Explored Foot Pressure in Children with Valgus Foot Deformity at Northwestern University**

I participated in the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) at Northwestern University. I received a 4000-dollar stipend, airfare, housing and traveling costs. I did research at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago in downtown Chicago and worked with Dr. Karakostas on gait studies and also did an independent project on foot pressure for children with valgus foot deformity. I learned about valgus foot deformities and the effect on gait, different types of gait deformities, and use of the equipment. SROP is also unique because students also have the opportunity to be selected for their PhD program early if recommended by their mentor. The rehabilitation institute, the people, and the city made the experience very memorable. Other scholars should definitely consider spending the summer at a different institution for networking, making new friends, and falling in love with a new place. I learned a lot about myself being so far away from home. I highly recommend participating in SROP.

**Alexandra Davis Examined “Harnessing Entrepreneurial Potential in South Africa’s Townships as a Catalyst for Inclusive Growth: A Case Study of Soweto” in South Africa**

This summer, funded by the David A. Plastino Scholarship program, I spent two months in South Africa conducting research on entrepreneurship and small business development in South Africa’s townships. In addition to formal research, I interned with both a non-profit organization in Cape Town and a think tank in Johannesburg, which allowed me to further immerse myself in the topic and to help to understand the delicate confluence of social, political, and economic factors to create change in communities. The Plastino program is unique because it allows scholars to design a program to exactly suit their academic and professional interests. Designing your own program gives you a great deal of freedom and a great deal of room for personal growth as well.
National McNair Scholars Research Competition and Graduate School Fair

We Offered Three Student Seminars

1) Conquering Graduate School Admissions
This was an overview of the expectations and procedures for applying to graduate school. We discussed types of standardized tests for graduate admission, personal statements, how this process is different from applying to undergraduate programs, funding and other general topics related to the graduate school application process.

Presenters - Dr. Keeley Powell, UD Assistant Director for Recruitment and Diversity and Maggie Sikora, Director of Admissions and Enrollment Services

2) UD McNair Information Session & Panel
Are you interested in becoming a McNair Scholar? This seminar provided an overview of the application criteria, selection process, scholar expectations, and overall benefits of being selected to as a McNair Scholar at the University of Delaware.

Presenters – McNair Staff and McNair Scholars

3) Myth Busters: Graduate School Funding
This discussion was designed to decrease myths and fears about graduate school funding.

Presenters – Mary Martin, Assistant Provost for Graduate & Professional Education

Research Poster Competition Winners
Shared $1,000 in Cash Prizes

Social Science: Alexandra Davis*, “Harnessing Entrepreneurial Potential in South Africa’s Townships as a Catalyst for Inclusive Growth: A Case Study of Soweto.”

Humanities: Omar Durán*, “Observing Invisible Corpses: Gender and Violence in Teresa Margolles’s ‘Embroidered Fabric.’”

Science: Kimberly Milla, “Reduction of Magnetic Resonance Imaging Processing Time for the Assessment of Leg Muscle Volume in Children with Cerebral Palsy.”


*Current UD McNair Scholars

Over 80 graduate programs participated in the 11th Annual McNair Graduate School Fair
Outstanding McNair Faculty Mentor Award

McNair faculty mentors are important members of the McNair team. Each year, McNair Scholars are asked to nominate faculty mentors for the “Outstanding McNair Faculty Mentor Award.” Criteria for the nomination and selection were based on several mentoring qualities.

Selection Criteria:

1. Helped McNair Scholar(s) better understand the importance and process of undergraduate research;
2. Enhanced the academic and personal growth of McNair Scholar(s) towards the pursuit of graduate degree(s);
3. Was enthusiastic, supportive, available, and accessible to the McNair Scholar(s)
4. Above and beyond supporter of the McNair Scholars Program

2013 Winners of the Outstanding McNair Faculty Mentor Award

Dr. Erik Thostenson
Department of Mechanical Engineering

Dr. Julie Hubbard
Department of Psychology

The 2013 winners of the Outstanding McNair Faculty Mentor Award are Dr. Erik Thostenson (left) and Dr. Julie Hubbard (right). Rossiny Beaucejour (senior) commended his mentor, Dr. Erik Thostenson, for going beyond his duties as a research mentor and advising Rossiny on how to excel in his courses, build relationships with his peers and professors, and pursue graduate school. Rossiny is grateful for the opportunities his mentor has afforded him, including funding for research equipment and training. Jordan Barnada (junior) describes her mentor, Dr. Julie Hubbard, as a “model mentor” whom any scholar would be fortunate to have as a mentor. Jordan was impressed by her mentor’s ability to both scaffold and challenge her, helping Jordan to develop the skills necessary to think and work both collaboratively and independently.

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

— Benjamin Franklin
Name: Quindara Lazenbury, ‘13

Quote: “Dr. Saunders, I miss my McNair family very much. I really do appreciate all the training and skills I gained while in the program. I definitely feel prepared for graduate school thanks to you and all of my McNair family.”

Graduate School Information: Quindara is attending American University in Washington, DC pursuing a Master’s degree in Strategic Communication. The program will guide Quindara into a career of marketing, journalism and music entertainment. She is a graduate assistant for Dr. Rhonda Zaharna, who is an expert in research of intercultural communication.

Name: Brooklynn Hitchens, ‘13

Quote: “I miss my time at UD and I’m realizing how different grad school is from undergrad. I hope I can help out with McNair in the near future. I’m learning about all the types of situations that McNair taught can arise in graduate school. My first semester went well. I’m working on two research projects. I submitted my McNair research paper with Dr. Payne for journal submission.”

Graduate School Information: Brooklynn is attending Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey as a Ralph J. Bunche Fellow pursuing her PhD in Sociology.

Name: Amber Beaman, ‘13

Quote: “McNair pushed me to pursue grad school. I’ve always been interested in graduate school, but I knew nothing about all that it entailed until participating in McNair. I also got experience doing research with a faculty mentor, which helped me learn that I like research. McNair helped me turn my thought of grad school into the actions of getting research experience, and gaining admission to a school that I liked.”

Graduate School Information: Amber is attending Penn State University pursuing a Masters of Education in Teaching and Curriculum.