

McNair Scholars Program

NEWSLETTER
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The WVU McNair Scholars Holiday Dinner was held on December 3, 2006. Although we have no December graduates this year, it was an enjoyable evening where scholars ate a delicious meal and shared their academic and social endeavors before entering the stressful time of fall semester finals



Sewit Araia and mentor, Dr. Suzanne Bell, enjoying each other's company at the dinner



Lauren Dembeck and fellow scholars at the dinner



CALLING FOR 2007 McNAIR SUMMER RESEARCH INTERNS

Assistant Director, Dr. Mei, and Graduate Assistants Angela Derk and Anna Stasick have been seen all over campus spreading the McNair word. The McNair staff has recruited in several academic buildings on both the Downtown and Evansdale campuses as well as at the Recreation Center and the Mountainlair. McNair Scholars receive many wonderful benefits such as GRE seminars, help with applying to graduate programs, research opportunities, travel, and cultural activities, etc. The program is now accepting applications for the 2007 cohort. The application deadline is January 31, 2007. Application forms can be downloaded from our website <http://www.wvu.edu/~mcnair>. Hurry; please refer a student to us soon!

Eligibility requirements

- 1) U.S citizens or permanent residents
- 2) First-generation and income-eligible OR under-represented students
- 3) CGPA 3.0 or higher
- 4) Will have completed sophomore year by MAY '07
- 5) Interested in pursuing graduate degrees



Dr. Mei and Angela Derk answering questions at recruitment booth

TRAVEL NEWS

Scholars have become world travelers, studying and exploring all over the globe. In the past WVU McNair Scholars have journeyed to China, the United Kingdom, Ghana, and Ecuador just to name a few countries. In August, McNair Scholars Lauren Dembeck and Jason Wilkinson spent time studying in Spain. Lauren majors in Biology and minors in Spanish; and Jason is a History and Anthropology major who studies ancient civilizations. Regarding their explorations, Lauren and Jason shared:

"My trip to Spain was an incredible experience. It takes you to a completely new level when you can go to another country and converse with the people in their native language. I highly recommend for other students to study abroad. You get to take courses, practice the language, meet people from all over the world, and in my case, go to a gorgeous beach every day after class!" ~ Lauren



Lauren



Dembeck

Jason Wilkinson

“Traveling to a foreign country is a great learning experience, and actually digging through its past is even more rewarding. Not only did I experience modern Spain, I examined the material culture of people living in Spain over 15,000 years ago.” ~ Jason

McNair Graduate Assistant, Angela Derk (2001 Scholar), has also been globe trotting during the month of November. Angela presented her research entitled **Learning:**

The Educational Journey from High School to College for West Virginia University McNair Scholars at the Race, Ethnicity, Place conference in San Marcos, Texas. After spreading the McNair word in the great state of Texas, Angela traveled to Japan for ten days to visit her sister who teaches in Kochi, Japan. She says,

“Travel is the greatest educational experience a person can have. Seeing the world and its many beautiful cultures allows us to appreciate what we do and do not have in America.”



~ SREB ~

Kelly Hale, a senior accounting major, was nominated by the McNair staff to attend the Compact for Faculty Diversity 2006 Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board. Upon returning from the conference held in Miami, Florida, she shared,

“The Compact was a wonderful networking opportunity for undergraduate students...after attending I have been further inspired to complete my Ph.D. in Accounting and feel better informed of what it takes to get to this point. I am glad that I was able to attend this conference because these conferences are a constant encouragement that you can make it if you put forth the effort necessary.”



Director's Corner

Anita G. Mayer

I am happy to report that West Virginia University (WVU) has been awarded a Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) grant by the National Science Foundation. Ten additional higher education institutions in Kentucky and West Virginia will partner with WVU to increase the quality and quantity of minority and under-represented undergraduate students majoring in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Whereas the WVU Phase I LPSAMP program is geared to recruit and retain undergraduate students interested in the STEM disciplines, the WVU McNair Scholars program is ready to assist these students as they prepare for their doctoral degrees (also a goal of the LSAMP initiative). The McNair program staff would like to congratulate Phyllis Barnhart, Associate Director for WVNano and Michael Mays, professor of Mathematics at WVU for spearheading this new program geared toward supporting minority student interest in the STEM disciplines. The staff and students of the WVU McNair Scholars Program look forward to working with the alliance as they too facilitate achievement, and increase the likelihood that under-represented and minority students will achieve greatness through education.



ALUMNI NEWS

Jackie Bass (2000) is currently attending UC-Berkeley, working towards a Ph.D. in Political Science. Her areas of interest are the welfare state, the knowledge economy, and education policy.

Jon Michael Bosley (2003) successfully defended his thesis *Mapping Vegetation Density and Water Inundation in a Recovering Wetland: the Mesopotamian Marshlands* on December 1. As his committee said, "When you write up your research and submit it for publication, you will have made a significant impact on your field." Congratulations Jon Michael!

Wenda Harris (2003) is currently serving as a Student Services Coordinator for the University System of Maryland. She is no longer a high school English teacher. She decided that she wanted to help students beyond the classroom. Her plan is to obtain a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology and become Dr. Harris someday.

Jodie Hoover (2003) is now officially Mrs. Jodie Elza. Jodie and Justin were married on August 12th in Wheeling, WV. Jodie is employed at Wheeling Jesuit University and plans to obtain a degree in Elementary Education.

Gabe Tapia (2003)

Gabe and Jessica Tapia are the proud parents of Samantha Ramsey Tapia, born on July 30.

COE annual conference in New York

Sheyi Ojofeitimi (2000) and **Tochukwu Aguoji (2004)** attended the McNair Alumni reception in New York at the Council for Opportunity in Education annual conference in September. They had a good time catching up with Dr. Mei and Angie Derk at the reception.

Troy Christman (2000)

Troy obtained his MFA in Sculpture from the University of Delaware a few years ago and is pursuing his art full time while caring for his eight-month-old daughter Alayna. Troy's wife, JeanMarie, is an Assistant Professor. Troy with wife JeanMarie and daughter Alayna

WVU McNair Scholars Program

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COMMUNITY SERVICE

A group of McNair Scholars, family and friends, including Kelly Hale, Heather Gomez, Nnenna Minimah, Ehren Cruz, Jason Wilkinson, Sewit Araia, Lenin Leon and his wife Rachel, joined Dr. Lisa Weihman, McNair Research Writing course instructor, to form the Morgantown Friends of Allie this past fall. The group was one of the top ten fundraisers for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Light the Night charity walk, raising over \$700 to honor the memory of Allie Scott, an infant who died of Acute Myeloid Leukemia in 2004.

PLEASE WELCOME

Graduate student Anna Stasick is our latest addition to the McNair staff. She is a Graduate Assistant for our program and a WVU McNair alumna from the 2001 cohort. Anna is a doctoral student in the History department concentrating her studies on Public History.