

West Virginia University

# McNair Scholars Program

Newsletter

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*This issue of the McNair Newsletter is dedicated to McNair Alumni*



Exciting things are happening in the lives of the WVU McNair Alumni. Thus we decided to dedicate this issue of the newsletter to them. We'll begin with our program's former graduate assistant, Eunice Rohrer, also a 2001 McNair Scholar. She is a first-generation college student who obtained her Master's degree in Journalism this past May from WVU. Eunice applied and had been accepted into a doctoral program but decided to defer in order to obtain some teaching experience. She is now teaching English as a second language in Taiwan. About her international experience, she said in an email,

"I've never faced a bigger challenge or enjoyed anything more. My fellow English teachers and I have...supported each other through homesickness, unusually strong typhoons and three earthquakes. Teaching those who have little accurate knowledge of English is an awesome privilege and responsibility that I will always cherish."



Eunice and her English students at a night market in Shilin, Taiwan.



Eunice along the Danshui River

## **McNair Scholars Care: Community Service Project 2004**

Because of regular email updates Eunice sent, the WVU McNair family heard about the typhoons that hit Taiwan late summer. We decided to send care packages to typhoon victims in Taiwan as a community project. When Florida and other states were hit by hurricanes, the McNair Scholars decided to expand the community project to include domestic hurricane victims also. Scholars diligently gathered and distributed donations of clothes, shoes, food, books and money to the local Red Cross. Donnie Hill is pictured below as he volunteered to collect monetary donations from local businesses and delivered goods to the Morgantown Red Cross for distribution. In addition, a check was sent to World Vision in Taiwan for the typhoon relief.



## *McNair Scholars Alumni News*



**Jon Michael Bosley** (2003 Scholar) is presently working on his Master's degree at Oregon State University. Regarding graduate school he says, "I believe that the key is to just hang in there, and things will work out."

Jon Michael also recommends visiting the following link to help successfully survive graduate school:

<http://scholar.google.com>. As a McNair Scholar, he traveled with his faculty mentor Dr. Tim Warner to the Democritus University of Thrace in Xanthi, Greece. There Jon Michael learned about remote sensing through lectures, guest speakers and field trips. Visit his website to learn more about the trip and Greek culture at :

<http://www.earth.wvu.edu/Greece2004.htm>.

**Gino DeGregori** (2001 Scholar) graduated with a master's degree in Software Engineering from WVU in May 2004. Gino is working as a software engineer for a company in McLean, VA, and plans to enroll in another Master's program in the spring.

**Nikki Hardy** (2000 Scholar) completed her master's degree in Exercise Physiology in May 2004.

**Wenda Harris** (2002 Scholar) is teaching high school English in Frederick, MD, after receiving her master's degree in Education from Ohio State University in June 2004. Wenda inspired the current McNair Scholars when she spoke at the 2004 WVU McNair Summer Research closing banquet.

**Serena Joslin** formerly Gibson (2001 Scholar) is a graduate assistant teaching general psychology and working in the psychology AD/HD clinic as she completes her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. She recently presented her thesis entitled "The Stereotypical World of Disney: Investigating the what-is-beautiful-is-good stereotype in the films of Walt Disney" at the AABT (Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy) in New Orleans.

**Laura Steele** (2002 Scholar) received her master's degree in Elementary Education from WVU in May 2004. She worked as a counselor with Upward Bound this summer in Fairbanks, Alaska. She loved AK so much that she decided to take a teaching position at Brevig Mission. Laura teaches a kindergarten class and is also the cheerleading and cross country ski coach for the school.

**Jennis Taylor** (2001 Scholar) is earning her Ph.D. at George Mason University and recently had her McNair research published in the Sept 2004 issue of *Public Choice*. It may be reviewed online at the following address:

<http://www.kluweronline.com/issn/0048-5829/> (Click 'free issue' and then 'next issue' 4 times until you get to Sept 2004 and scroll down, it is the 5th article.)

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***Congratulations!!!!***

## December Graduates

**Brie Frey** (2001 Scholar) earned her Master's degree at WVU in Geography and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management. Brie organized a public meeting to share her research with the Morgantown community at Milan-Puskar Health Rite. The title of the event was *Women and Leadership in Community Organizations in Morgantown, WV*. Dr. Oberhauser, her former McNair mentor and graduate advisor, was the co-facilitator.



Brie sharing her research

**Lauren Pizza** (2002 Scholar) graduated from WVU with dual baccalaureate degrees in Finance and Accounting.



*Director's Corner*  
Anita G. Mayer  
Director, McNair Scholars Program



Whether one celebrates Hanukkah, Christmas, or Kwanzaa is not nearly as noteworthy as is how we celebrate the season itself. *It is far better to give than to receive* is played out everyday throughout the year but in December, we actually allow ourselves time to relish and take pleasure in the occasion. The holidays offer a time for hope, gratitude, giving, heartfelt appreciation and humble self-reflection. We are reminded of why we do what we do, and of the benefits that we spread all over the world as a result.

Where in the world are the WVU McNair Scholars today? Well, let's see... Eunice is in Taiwan teaching English; Amy is in Columbia conducting research and Laura is in Alaska teaching kindergarteners. From Africa to Atlanta and everywhere in between, WVU McNair Scholars spread their goodness, their hope and their good will. We are reminded this season of the people who help us as we prepare our scholars for their "places in the sun". At this time, we send our heartfelt thanks to our faculty mentors, the real cornerstones of our program. Our mentors lead, counsel, encourage, question, prod, nudge and guide McNair scholars as they develop appreciation and passion for the intrinsic value of research and its pervasive place in our existence.

For us, December is also a time for renewal and replenishment. As our scholars prepare for graduate school, we prepare for a new cohort of students to enter the program. Flyers, emails and various methods of recruiting are underway as we look to engage the next generation of scholars who will one day become faculty and eventually, mentors. For centuries, faculty mentors have ensured that our ivy halls continue on in the manner that they were constructed. Today is no different. Through McNair, faculty enjoy the fundamental value of mentoring. Through McNair, we assure our future.

## The 2004 Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring

In October, Dr. Mei and Tenishia Rhodes traveled to Atlanta, GA, to attend the compact for faculty diversity sponsored by the Southern Regional Education Board. Tenishia, a secondary education major, was selected as the 2004 West Virginia University McNair Scholar representative. Here's what she said about the experience:

"What I especially noticed about this conference was that I do not have to have the same field of study as another scholar, as long as we share the same goal - to become experts of our field and change the face of the professorate - in order to carry on an intellectual conversation. We listened to 34 SREB Ph.D. graduates tell their inspiring stories of how they literally survived gradate school...we learned from them that we have a rough road ahead but determination and hard work will aid us on our journey to our Ph.D."



Tenishia Rhodes pictured with 2003 WVU McNair Scholar, Adrian Thompson, who is also a SREB doctoral fellow at WVU.



## Wedding Bells



**Gina Zirilli** (2002 Scholar) and her husband Clinton were married in July 2004. Gina also completed her Master's degree at Ohio State University this past summer.

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## ***McNair Scholars Program Spring 2005 Schedule***

Spring Semester – McNair Class meets every Monday at 5 pm

January 28 – Commemoration of the Challenger Tragedy

Graduate School Colloquium at Hatfield

April 14-17 – University of Binghamton McNair Conference

Cultural Event and Spring Community Service Project Date To Be Announced



***Happy New Year!***