

West Virginia University

# McNair Scholars Program

Newsletter

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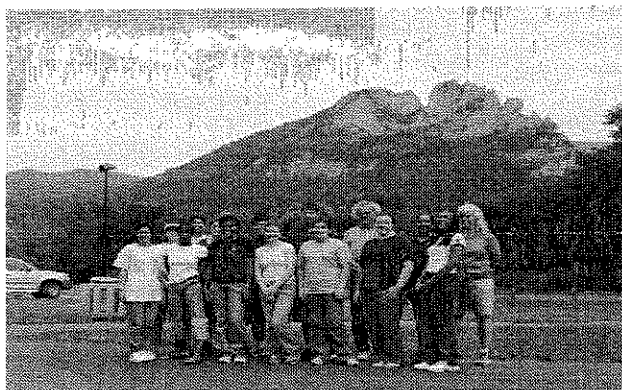


## Happy Holidays!



Fall semester has come and gone. The McNair Scholars Program staff wishes you peace and joy during this holiday season and in the New Year. To recap our Fall 2002 activities, the McNair staff and scholars began the semester with a retreat at Canaan Valley Resort and a trip to Seneca Rocks, WV, on September 13-14. We had a fun time getting re-acquainted after time off following the Summer Research Internship. Then Scholars were busily involved in SPSS training in October, and a seminar on "How to Write a Personal Statement" in November. To celebrate graduation for Serena Gibson and Gino Degregori, the Program held a graduation dinner on December 7 at the Tea Garden.

It is sad to wave goodbye to Serena and Gino, who have been remarkable WVU McNair Scholars and have set excellent examples for their fellow McNairians. We wish you the best in pursuing your graduate studies and upcoming marriages! As we say goodbye to graduates, we are also glad to welcome back Jennis Taylor, who has spent her Fall semester studying in Italy and is due to return in December. Jennis has been keeping in touch with us via email throughout the semester. We assure our readers that you will read about her interesting adventure in Europe in the next issue of the McNair Newsletter.



McNair Scholars and staff at Seneca Rock, WV.

*Second Annual McNair Colloquium on Graduate Education* will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2003, from 7-9 p.m. in the Mountainlair Blue Ballroom. The event is co-sponsored by the Center for Black Culture and Research, College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, College of Human Resources and Education, Eberly College of Arts and Sciences, Honors Program, and Office of Graduate Education. Admission is free to the public. WVU undergraduate students interested in pursuing graduate studies are strongly encouraged to attend. Participants will have opportunities to interact with graduate faculty from various departments and current graduate students. Representatives from different Colleges will also be on hand to give out information about graduate programs. A reception will follow.



## Director's Corner

Anita G. Mayer  
Director, McNair Scholars Program

# TRIO

RONALD E. MCNAIR  
POST-BACCALAUREATE  
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

*Whether or not you reach your goals in life depends entirely on how well you prepare for them and how badly you want them. You're eagles! Stretch your wings and fly to the sky.*

*Dr. Ronald E. McNair*

January 28, 2003 marks the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. space shuttle Challenger disaster. Most Americans will remember the day because of Astronaut Christa McAuliffe, a high school teacher from New Hampshire, poised to prove to children across the nation that no dream is too big, no challenge too tough and no opportunity too far out of reach. Sadly, the Challenger claimed the life of Christa and the other six astronauts that day in a fiery explosion that will forever be imbedded in our memories.

Ronald Erwin McNair was also on the Challenger that fateful day. Born on October 21, 1950, in Lake City, South Carolina, Ronald grew up in oppressive poverty. A poor black southern teen in the 1960's, Ronald's chances of success were by most standards, slim. Yet Ronald believed in his dreams; he embraced his challenges and he sought out far-reaching opportunities. Indeed, his passion would drive him to earn his Ph.D. in 1976 and to become rightfully recognized as an expert in the field of laser physics. In 1978, Dr. McNair was selected from a pool of 10,000 applicants for the space shuttle program and he became the second African American to fly in space.

Little did Dr. McNair know that his own fearless quest for knowledge would summon thousands of students to embrace their own dreams, accept their own challenges and seek out their own far-reaching opportunities. As we humbly remember the Challenger explosion, we also celebrate The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program. We celebrate that today, no dream, no challenge and no opportunity is unattainable. We celebrate the success of our own McNair Scholars who are following in his footsteps and creating even greater opportunities for future generations of children who will seek their own destinies and who will know that they too, can attain greatness if only they stay focused on the dream, *stretch their wings and fly to the sky.*



## In Their Own Words about Campus Visits and Conferences:

**Campus Visits** McNair Scholars had the opportunity to visit University of Maryland, College Park, in October and Ohio State University in November.

*"The trip to UMD was such a great experience. The (graduate) fair was very informative and it was nice to get such honest feedback from the graduate panel."* **Jodie Hoover**

*"The highlight of the (OSU) trip was hearing the keynote speaker. It helped me realize that although things may seem hectic and overwhelming and it seems like there are so many obstacles of getting into graduate school, but 'troubles don't last always'. Overall, I feel the visit rejuvenated me to jump back into the graduate school process with both feet."*

**Wenda Harris**

*"Visiting the OSU campus and psychology department was a worthwhile experience. Having a one-on-one conversation with a professor in my field and a current graduate student was especially beneficial."* **Teresa Jones**

## SREB

Nicole Johnson was selected to attend the SREB (Southern Regional Education Board) Conference in Washington, D.C. in October. *"Going to the SREB Conference was a very enlightening experience. This conference, for the most part, gave me the chance to be in a place where I can actually see the many minorities that are also aspiring to achieve and it comforted me to know that I am not alone in my field."* **Nicole Johnson**



## Wedding News!



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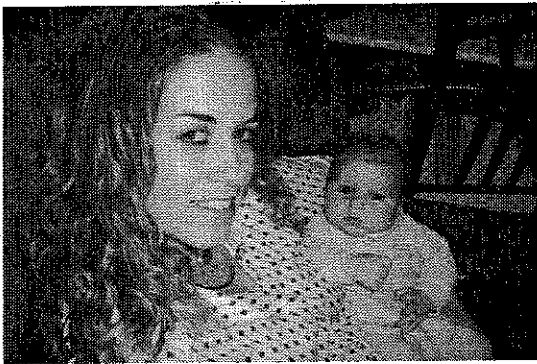


2002 Scholar Christa Dodd married Ryan Dotson on July 12, 2002.



Gabe (2002 Scholar) and Jessica Tapia's big day was on August 10, 2002.

## Baby News!



Proud mom and 2001 Scholar Angie Derk with son, Cole.

## Other News!

*Gabe Tapia* received the Collins Math Scholarship from the WVU Math Department in August. This scholarship is given to promising undergraduate Math majors. Way to go, Gabe! **Brain + Hard Work = \$\$\$**



*Jodie Hoover* was nominated by the WVU Geography Department to be the undergraduate spokesperson to the Dean. Her duty is to meet with the Dean to discuss ideas or concerns of undergraduate students.

## 2000 Alumni News:

*Jackie Bass* is one of the Rotary Foundation's first class of 70 Rotary World Peace Scholars. The Scholarship will fund two years of study at the Rotary Center at the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*Angela Dixon* has earned an externship placement at Charleston Area Medical Center, WV, for Fall 2002. Angela will graduate with a Master's Degree from the WVU Center for Excellence in Disabilities in December 2002.

*Nikki Hardy* will graduate with a Master's Degree in Exercise Physiology from WVU in May 2003.

*Blaise Kapombe* is working as a Computer Systems Programmer at WESTAT in Rockville, MD. He plans to attend graduate school in 2004.

*Sheyi Ojofeitimi* is working as a Physical Therapist in New York. She was engaged in April 2002, and is planning a Fall 2003 wedding.

*Jonathan Smith* will graduate with a Master's Degree in Journalism from WVU in May 2003.

*Matthew Smith* will graduate with a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from WVU in August 2003.

*Gabrielle St. Leger* is working as a Residence Hall Director at West Virginia University.

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## **McNair Scholars Program Spring 2003 Schedule**

The McNair Scholars Program is proud to announce that beginning Spring 2003, McNair Scholars will be able to gain one credit hour per semester for participating in McNair seminars. Scholars will register for MDS 493 – McNair Research Internship which meets from 4-7 pm on the following Mondays: January 13, February 10, March 10, and April 14; and from 7-9 pm on Tuesday, January 21.



All work and no play make McNair Scholars dull. Thus McNair Scholars are going on a ski trip at Wisp Ski Resort on Sunday, January 19, 2003. Come and have fun!!

