

West Virginia University

# McNair Scholars Program

Newsletter

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## First Steps...

## McNair Scholars Program Takes off at WVU!

WVU McNair Scholars received recognition for the research they conducted over the course of the six-week summer internship program. The research program was designed to give students an experience in research writing development and research methodology. The students also participated in graduate school campus visits and cultural enrichment activities throughout the six-week program. At the end of the program, McNair Scholars presented research proposals at an in-house conference here at WVU. McNair Scholars will have the opportunity in the future, to present their work at McNair Research Conferences on different campuses throughout the country.

The McNair Scholars Program is a federal TRIO program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It is named after the late astronaut and physicist Ronald E. McNair. McNair was an individual who overcame many odds to be awarded his PhD in physics and to later become an astronaut for NASA. The dedication and will to succeed exemplified in the life of Ronald E. McNair is an inspiration to all and the motivation behind the McNair Scholars Program. Members of Congress approved the funding of the McNair Program to

encourage college students with similar backgrounds as Dr. McNair to pursue doctoral studies. The program is dedicated to the high standards of achievement inspired by Dr. McNair's life and work.

**Drive the nail the right boy,  
hit it on the head;  
Strike with all your might boy,  
while the iron is red;  
When you have work to do boy,  
do it with a will;  
He who reaches the top,  
first must climb the hill.  
Though you stubble off boy,  
never be downcast;  
Try and try again boy,  
you'll succeed at last.**

**~Sam Heastie**

McNair scholars like many students, often wage wars within themselves about their own ability and willingness to seize opportunities and realize their dreams. The preceding poem was offered to the scholars as one source of fuel to ignite and maintain their fires. The poem was delivered to scholars at the beginning of summer during orientation and at a dinner banquet that formally concluded the summer internship.

## McNair Scholars Class of 2000

### Student

Melia Atwell  
 Jacqueline Bass  
 Katrina Bragg  
 Troy Christman  
 Angela Dixon  
 Adriana Hardy  
 Mandi Frederick  
 Jodi Heffinger  
 Tiyonna Jenkins  
 Blaise Kapombe  
 Michael Kapombe  
 Gmelyn Link  
 Andrena Mendez  
 Sheyi Ojofeitimi  
 Desiree Paige  
 Jonathan Smith  
 Matthew Smith  
 Gabrielle St. Leger  
 Kevin Taylor

### Major

Philosophy/English  
 Finance/Spanish  
 Chemistry  
 Art  
 Speech Pathology  
 Exercise Physiology  
 English  
 Biology  
 Marketing  
 Engineering/Computer Science  
 Computer Science  
 Journalism/News Editorial  
 Political Science  
 Physical Therapy  
 Marketing  
 Journalism  
 Mechanical Engineering  
 Secondary Education/English  
 Business Administration

### Hometown

Caretta, WV  
 St. Albans, WV  
 Leewood, WV  
 Long Pond, PA  
 Hillsboro, TX  
 Warrenville, IL  
 Rivesville, WV  
 Anawalt, WV  
 Ft. Washington, MD  
 Ft. Washington, MD  
 Fairmont, WV  
 Chapmanville, WV  
 Flushing, NY  
 Washington, D.C.  
 Clinton, MD  
 Mineral Wells, WV  
 Hempstead, NY  
 Piedmont, WV

## Hello...Goodbye!!!



The McNair Scholars Program would like to welcome the new Program Coordinator, Dr. Betty Mei. Originally from Hong Kong, Dr. Mei received her doctorate in Communication Studies and Educational Psychology at WVU in 1988 and her B.A. in Communication Arts from SUNY, Plattsburgh. Before coming to the McNair Scholars Program, Dr. Mei served as the academic director at WV Junior College, and prior to her last position, an assistant professor of Communication at Salem-Teikyo University in Salem, WV. Also, the McNair Program said goodbye to Melissa Mendez, Program Assistant. Melissa began graduate school at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor this fall in the School of Social Work. New Program assistant, Sam Heastie, joined the team at the end of August. Sam is currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Psychology.



We would like to wish good luck to our graduating seniors, Jacqueline Bass, Gabrielle St. Leger, and Sheyi Ojofeitimi. Jacqueline Bass started her graduate studies in International relations at the University of Birmingham in England this fall. Gabrielle St. Leger will complete the 5-year teacher education program here in Morgantown and will graduate in May 2001 with an MA in Secondary Education. Sheyi Ojofeitimi also began her studies toward a master's degree in physical therapy at WVU this fall.



## Director's Corner

Calvin O. Mastiela  
 Associate Professor of Geography

Last October West Virginia University became a recipient of the prestigious Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. In so doing WVU joined approximately 150 universities and colleges nationally to provide hope and opportunity to promising undergraduates who seek to pursue graduate studies.

As a federally funded program, we owe our legacy to Ronald McNair, a distinguished physicist and astronaut. After the Challenger space shuttle accident in 1986, the United States Congress named the newly established Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program for Ronald E. McNair. WHY? Because the US Congress considered McNair an exemplary role model for youth.

The Department of Education, which administers the program, recognized the need to address the lack of sufficient numbers of doctoral students who come from low-income, first generation backgrounds, and underrepresented groups. The US Department of Education thus initiated the McNair Program to improve these students' preparation and motivation for graduate study. Here at WVU we are proud to be a recipient of this grant to provide this bridge of opportunity to students of diverse racial backgrounds. Ron McNair's spirit and values live on at WVU.

Since embarking on this journey, I am proud to present the first class of McNair Scholars. The 19 students out of 20 we are funded to support each year are truly the most talented and gifted students I have ever worked with. Their research interests

range from creative writing to physical therapy to journalism to computer science, engineering and biology. Though getting here has not been easy, their level of dedication, intellectual curiosity and social demeanor has been most gratifying. Out of the first year intake, three scholars are now in graduate school.

As we look into the next crop of McNair Scholars, we are determined to recruit outstanding candidates and retain outstanding McNair Scholars. The McNair program staff and those scholars who have been through the program know what an important bridge the McNair program is for advancing one's educational aspirations. Helping to prepare students to take advantage of this opportunity is our primary objective in the McNair Scholars Program office.

If you know a student or if you are a student who meets the criteria, come by 710 Allen Hall, and pick up an application or simply visit us...it will be our privilege to greet and serve you.





# Summer Research Opportunity 2000

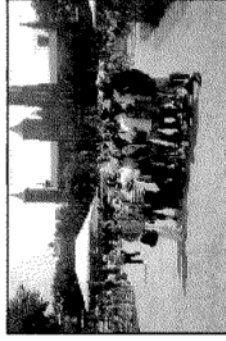
"The Universe is at Our Fingertips"



**McNair Scholars Cookout**



**Visiting Washington D.C. area schools, monuments and museums**



The McNair Scholars participated in a six-week research internship where they were engaged in intensive research writing and methodology development. During the six weeks, the Scholars also traveled to the Washington D. C. area to visit graduate schools, museums, and monuments in the D. C. area. The six-week summer program is a key component to the McNair Scholars Program. In addition to this program, McNair Scholars benefit throughout the academic year with graduate school admissions advising, GRE preparation seminars, tutoring, and support on many other levels.

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