



University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2013

OSHKOSH Issue V

McNair Renewed for 5 more years!

We are pleased to announce that our program was one of the few this year to be selected to continue funding students in their undergraduate research. Thank you everyone for your help. Please keep in contact so we can continue helping more students reach their dream in earning their PhDs.

McNair Scholars complete Undergraduate Research

The 2012 Cohort for the UWO McNair Scholars Program successfully completed their summer undergraduate research this past August. Students presented their research at the McNair Showcase on Friday, September 14th at the UWO Reeve Union Ballroom. Approximately 100 guests attended the event.

Ryan Bures: *Subdued Intermediate Filament Expression in the 13-Lined ground squirrel after Optic Nerve Damage.* Bures is a Senior majoring in Microbiology. His mentor was Dr. Dana Merriman from the Department of Biology & Microbiology.

Jaime Castillo: *Determination of the Antiviral Properties and Mechanisms in "Punica granatum" Aril Extract.* Castillo is a Senior majoring in Biology and Spanish. His mentor was Dr. Teri Shors from the Biology & Microbiology Department.

Brandi Deptula: *Diversity and Function of Bacteria Related to the Newly Isolated Organism JT5, a Possible Lignocellulose-Degrading Species from the Gut of an evolutionarily Higher Termite.* Deptula is a Senior Majoring in Microbiology. Her Mentor was Dr. Eric Matson from the Department of Biology & Microbiology.



Chelsy Herring presenting her PowerPoint on her 2012 undergraduate summer research at the McNair Scholars Showcase.



Pictured above is the 2012 McNair Scholars Cohort that presented their posters at the McNair Showcase on September 14th, 2012.

Public Universities: An Intercultural Challenge. Fall is a Senior majoring in Human Services and Leadership. His mentor was Dr. Alfred Kisubi in the Department of Human Services and Education Leadership.

Chelsy Herring: *Evidence of Rapid Climate Change Events Within Playa Wetlands.* Herring is a Senior majoring in Geography. Her mentor was Dr. Mark Bowen from the Department of Geography.

Donavon Johnson: *Common Components That Contribute to The Success of African American Students at The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.* Johnson is a Junior majoring in African American Studies. His mentor was Dr. Norlisha Crawford from the Department of English.

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Papa Fall: *African Students' Experience of Academic Life in U.S.*

Jeremy Kroll: *Finding a Good death: Reconciling*



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McNair Scholars complete Undergraduate (cont.)

the Crisis of the End of Life. Kroll is a Senior majoring in Religious Studies and Nursing. His mentor was Dr. Michael Baltutis from the Department of Religious Studies.

Suave Kyles: *Undergraduate Nursing Students Perceptions on Trans-cultural Nursing and Diversity.* Kyles is a Sophomore majoring in Nursing. Her mentor was Dr. Paula McNeil in the Department of Nursing.

Adrian Landreth: *Organic Synthesis of 2-n-Nonyl-4-hydroxyquinoline-N-oxide.* Landreth is a Senior Majoring in Chemistry. His mentor was Dr. Linfeng Xie and Dr. Brant Kedrowski in the Department of Chemistry.

Lang Lee Lee: *Cultural Differences Between Hmong and White Americans' Love Styles.* Lee is a Senior Majoring in Psychology. His mentor was Dr. Chong-Man Chow from the Department of Psychology.

Michael Mason: *Maintaining Patient Safety: Improved communication in Clinical Education Settings.* Mason is a Senior Majoring in Nursing. His mentor was Dr. Suzanne Marnocha from the Department of Nursing.

Fabiola Navarro: *Matching Sensory Channels of Relating in Romantic Partners.* Navarro is a Junior majoring in Psychology. Her mentor was Dr. Anca Miron from the Department of Psychology.

Fauzia Osman: *Characterizing Antibacterial Activity of Fox River Bacterial Pigments.* Osman is a Junior majoring in Biology & Microbiology. Her mentor was Dr. Sabrina Mueller-Spitz from the Department of Biology & Microbiology.

Theodore Robbins: *Empathy Linked to Helping for a Stigmatized Group.* Robbins is a Senior majoring in Psychology. His mentor was Dr. David Lishner from the Department of Psychology.

Sitha Thor: *Examining Green Medicine in the Virology Laboratory.* Thor is a Senior Majoring in Biology & Microbiology. His Mentor was Dr. Teri Shors from the Department of Biology & Microbiology.

Taylor Waring: *Octavio Paz: A Space that Evaporates.* Waring is a Junior majoring in English. His mentor was Dr. Marguerite Helmers in the Department of English.

Kristie Wirth: *The Influence of Personality Traits and Depressive Symptoms on Music Preference.* Wirth is a Senior majoring in Psychology. Her mentor was Dr. Quin Chrobak from the Department of Psychology.

Darin White: *The Significance of the Story of Abraham in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.* White is a Junior majoring in Religious Studies. His mentor was Dr. Kathleen Corley from the Department of Religious Studies and Anthropology.



Pictured above is Jeremy Kroll answering questions and informing the McNair Scholars Showcase guests about his 2012 summer undergraduate research.



Mary L. Seaman

McNair Scholars Program Director

I am a true Wisconsinite. I am married to Charles who is a nurse at Sheltered Village in Ripon, WI. Our only child, Luke, was adopted from South Korea and is a submariner in the U.S. Navy stationed in Hawaii. In 1995 I earned two Bachelor of Science degrees, one in Biology and one in Psychology and in 1998, I earned my Master's of Science degree all at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. As an undergraduate student I have been involved in a myriad of research projects ranging from analyzing sturgeon stomachs (a 4 year study) to doing a summer research fellowship at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee where I studied zebra mussels. For my Master's degree research project I spent 4 months in Antarctica and studied the Photosynthesis-Irradiance Characteristics of *Phaeocystis Antarctica* and diatoms in the Ross Sea. Currently, I am in the process of earning my PhD at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. My latest grant involves studying the nuisance green alga "*Cladophora*." My research involves *Cyanobacterial* toxins in Lake Winnebago. The McNair Scholars Program is very special to me and I can relate to the students in the program because I was once a low income first generation student.

Graduate School Visits for 2012 Cohort

The UWO McNair Scholars always have a busy summer with GRE Workshops and conducting their undergraduate research, but there is always time for travel. Another one of the added benefits to being a McNair Scholar is the opportunity to visit various Graduate Schools. At these Graduate School visits the scholars get the opportunity to explore different campuses within and outside Wisconsin. At these visits not only do they get a tour of the campus but they set up meetings to meet with possible future faculty advisors and discuss their research. This is a great opportunity to make connections and learn if that university is the right place to continue their research. This summer we visited the University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Marquette University and Northern Illinois University as a group. At these universities our scholars met with Graduate Schools admissions members and other former McNair Scholars and graduate students.



At the University of Milwaukee Wisconsin Fauzia Osman and Jaime Castillo had the opportunity to go in a lab and see the research being conducted.

University of Minnesota



The graduate school visit to the University of Minnesota was one of our bigger trips this year. The students not only visited this great campus, but also were able to network with students from other universities from across the country. This trip was also a cultural experience for many of our students since many have never been to a city that big or to the Mall of America.

Northern Illinois University



Our scholars on a campus tour at Northern Illinois University before it started to rain.

UWO McNair Scholars Attend 21st Annual National Ronald E. McNair Research Conference

The 21st Annual National Ronald E. McNair Research Conference and Graduate Fair was held in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin on November 9-11, 2012. A group of ten UW Oshkosh McNair Scholars attended the conference. Kristie Wirth gave an oral presentation for her research on *The Influence of Personality Traits and Depressive Symptoms on Music Preference*. While the other nine students presented their posters at the poster presentation.

Over the three day conference students attended the Graduate School Fair, heard many inspiring speakers and had the opportunity to attend the Fireside Chat given by Carl McNair. The students also had the opportunity to listen to the other scholars oral presentations to learn about their research. We learned there were scholars from 13 different states during the Campus Roll Call held at the Saturday night banquet.

Scholars listened and asked questions to a panel of Deans and Directors from different universities. They also learned some of the best strategies for taking the GRE from Terry Axe for the Educational Testing Services. The students also were able to ask questions to current graduate students who shared their stories and gave advice for the scholars. The conference concluded with an inspiring speech from Keynote speaker DeLeon Gray, Ph. D, Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology, North Carolina State University. Dr. Gray shared his struggles to obtain his Ph.D and how he got to where he is today.

The scholars that attended this conference had an amazing time learning from other scholars, graduate students and directors of what they can do when they achieve the dream of obtaining their Ph.D. It was also a great experience to show off their summer research to such a big and diverse audience of academics that could ask them questions that helped them to explain their research more in depth.



Pictured above is Carl McNair brother of Dr. Ronald E. McNair giving his Annual Fireside Chat. Inspiring students to obtain the PhD. and sharing his brother's story.



Pictured to the left is Mary Seaman (Director), Christine Prange (Program Assistant), Fauzia Osman, Jaime Castillo, Sitha Thor, Fabiola Navarro, Taylor Waring, Kristie Wirth, Ben Sajdak, Jeremy Kroll, Brandi Deptula and Papa Fall.

UWO McNair Scholar Spotlight:

Jessica De Larwelle



Fascinated with human behavior and the importance of relationships, I continue to explore my academic and career interests in the social work profession. The McNair Scholars program provided me with opportunities to define my goals, engage in research, and develop the skills critical for success at the doctorate level. As a McNair scholar I conducted independent research under the supervision of Dr. Erin Winterrowd, an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. My engagement with the McNair Scholars program has challenged me to excel in completing my academic and career goals. Due to my academic achievement and participation in research I was accepted into the Master of Social Work program at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

While at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee I established academic goals to support my career objective of obtaining a PhD in social work. One short term academic aspiration is to complete the graduate coursework for the social work program with an exceptional grade point average. With my relentless determination and enthusiasm to learn I earned a 4.0 grade point average for my first semester in graduate studies. My second academic intention is to conduct research on disadvantaged individuals. I continue to accomplish this goal through active involvement in research on campus. Currently, I am a project assistant for Dr. Gwat Yong-Lie, an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and Associate Dean of Helen Bader School of Social Welfare. Through a collaborative effort we collect data from Outreach Community Health Centers and other local agencies in the Greater Milwaukee area who provide benefits and services to the homeless population. The assistantship enables me to learn about and conduct research on the homeless population in the Greater Milwaukee area. I also collaborate with Dr. Jung Kwak, an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. Her research study is, *“Decisional Conflicts at the End of Life: The needs of surrogates for persons with dementia,”* explores caregivers experiences of taking care of a relative with dementia. Through working with professor Kwak I transcribe qualitative interviews on end of life decisions. My academic success and participation in research demonstrates I have the necessary skills to pursue a PhD in social work. For my dissertation I plan to conduct research on familial involvement with at-risk children and adolescents to determine what preventative efforts are needed to reduce delinquency behaviors. Through this research I hope to develop and alter policies associated with how at-risk children, adolescents, and their families receive services. Lastly, my career goal is to utilize my research to inform others. I hope to do this as a professor, mentor and role model.

Jessica De Larwelle graduated from UW Oshkosh in 2011. If you want to get in contact with Jessica her email is delarwe2@uwm.edu.



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