

McNAIR SCHOLARS

WINTER 2009

McNAIR SCHOLAR WINS FREE COLLEGE VISIT: A. CLOUM GETS A CLOSER LOOK AT VANDERBILT

Audrey Cloum was invited to visit Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Here is her perspective:

“My visit to Vanderbilt University was one of the most life changing events that I have experienced. I was surrounded by other students from McNair Programs or Honors Programs from across the country. The conversations I had with these students were enough to inspire me to continue on my journey for a Ph.D. Their passion was contagious .

The main focus of the visit was to show us what Vanderbilt had to offer for graduate studies, but the prevailing message of the visit was to instill the confidence in us that we could earn a Ph.D. and that competitive admission to graduate programs to top universi-

ties was not something that we should be scared or intimidated about pursuing.

Dr. Pitt, who coordinated the visit, broke down the competitive admission process to graduate school in a way that was very easily understood. Graduate program recruiting committees are usually formed by faculty of the department, usually on a voluntary basis. It is very important that if you are looking for a particular program to be admitted you find out who is on the admission committee and make an effort to become acquainted with those individuals. From what I learned, your GRE scores, GPA, and personal statement are the most important things when applying.”

Audrey learned so much more from her visit, so consider talking with her more about her experience!

Dates to remember:

Spring 2009	May 4- June 25
Summer Research Institute	May 5- July 19
McNair Symposium	July 15 1-5 pm 106 Marshall

McNair Scholars

Program

Dr. Betty Brown-Chappell
Director

Cindy Rodrigues
Assistant Director

Kimberly Freeman
Program Secretary

Bushra Malaibari
Graduate Assistant
Editor

McNAIR SCHOLARS PARTICIPATE IN UNDERGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

McNair scholars made a splash at this year's Undergraduate Symposium. Ranging from oral to poster presentations, these scholars showed off their talent and interest in research to the University.

Jacinda Bunting had a poster presentation on the taste aversions and preferences in rats.

Lianna Cecil presented her find-

ings of ecotourists in Antarctica; she also presented her award-winning research on corporate social reporting.

Ashley Durand spoke about her research on protein signaling and response.

James Hendee had two different presentations: human trafficking

(Continued on page 2)



MARK WHEELER AT REGISTRATION WITH HIS POSTER.

CONTINUED: UNDERGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

and profitable globalization and its effect on the US labor force.

Brian Holman displayed a poster on a sustainable design in architecture with fellow researchers.

Sarah Killian showed her poster on the *Mys* gene found in *Peromyscus*, a rodent group.



NIKKI HENDRICKS-BOLLING (SCHOLAR), KIM FREEMAN (PROGRAM SECRETARY), AND CINDY RODRIGUES (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR) GET COZY FOR MORE PRESENTATIONS

Colleen Marquis presented on the fascination of war re-enacting in America.

Jason Phillips reported on the underlying causes for addictive behavior.

Dara Walker gave

an oral report on high school student activism during the Black Power Movement in the 1960s.

Mark Wheeler showed off his poster on the effect of racism in the 2008 presidential election.

Things to remember when presenting include: type your speaking notes

in an extra large font to read easily, stay calm, arrive before the start of your session, dress appropriately, and have fun!

The McNair Staff had a wonderful time seeing all the participants at Symposium—well done!



JACINDA BUNTING WITH DR. DON LOPPNOW, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

Staff and McNair participants had a ball at our annual Celebration of Excellence. Even the cold, wet weather could not stop the Program members from getting together for this fun event.

The luncheon was held in the Student Center. Mr. Michael Chappell acted as the Master of Ceremony. He kept the party moving on time and even had time to share jokes.

McNair participants had the chance to meet one another and talk. Students were given a list of twenty clues that matched with real people. Some of the clues involved

finding a twin, a veteran, and someone who could name the principle investigator of the McNair Scholars grant (that's Dr. Knapp, the Honors College's Director, by the way). While everyone participated, the first five to get



MR. MICHAEL CHAPPELL COMMANDED THE STAGE AS THE MASTER OF CEREMONY

names for all the questions were awarded prizes, including Lisa Denys and Mariano Marks.

Cindy Rodrigues and Dr. Betty Brown-Chappell recognized the current participants in the Program and graduating seniors. The Program is happy to see 16 McNair Scholars graduating this Winter, Spring, and Summer terms.

We would also like to send a thank you to Mr. Randy Mascharka who took all the amazing pictures during the celebration.

All the McNair staff would like to congratulate the participants for their hard work this year!

A FAREWELL BY DR. ROBERT SIMMONS III, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TEACHER EDUCATION

At the Celebration of Excellence, the McNair Scholars Program was proud to have Dr. Robert Simmons III give a reminder to all of our participants, past and present. Here are his words:

The great urban poet Notorious BIG proclaimed, "it was all a dream" when referring to his multimillion dollar success as one of the greatest hip hop MC's ever to bless the mike. Further into his highly intellectual analysis of success, he reveals his excitement by stating, "now I'm in the limelight cause I rhyme tight."

It is the thoughts of one of my favorite urban scholars, poets, and thugs, which frames my brief remarks to you this afternoon. While my story is far from similar to Notorious BIG, my rise from the streets of Detroit amidst the chaos of the crack cocaine epidemic...amidst the incarceration of my father...seems quite contrary to the sign on the door outside my office...Dr. Robert W. Simmons III. Nonetheless, the signage on my door is not a reminder of my success but a reminder of how far I've come.

When utilizing the comments of Notorious BIG to understand your journey toward a doctoral degree, I want to frame my brief comments around the notion of "using your success for the betterment of humanity." Far too often the numerous publications, grants, and other artifacts related to the success of college professors can create a heightened sense of self. Through this heightened sense of self, too many professors become

disconnected from the reality facing many communities. Furthermore, as noted by Notorious BIG, the limelight brought about through success in your field, is not simply a measure of success, but should serve as a notice of your increased responsibility. For those who come from groups who have been historically oppressed and marginalized by society, or more to the point—academia—your responsibility is ten fold. Your responsibility to work toward the betterment of humanity is built on the back, and buried in the caskets of people who have given their lives not for the sole purpose of your existence as Dr. Jones.

Before you begin to search your soul for the strength to determine how you might impact humanity, understand that your efforts will be blocked by those who operate from a different framework. Some will claim to work for social justice, and have job titles indicating such a commitment, but their actions will serve as counterproductive and often times not in your best interest. Some will tell you that working toward the betterment of humanity does not further your effort at obtaining tenure and promotion. Yet others will just simply occupy positions of power, real or imaginary, and attempt to defame your name and delegitimize your work because you make them uncomfortable. Perhaps their discomfort is because you don't look like them, or perhaps it's because they are unwilling to see a different intellectual perspective.



Regardless of the obstacles placed in your way, as I close, my charge to you is this: move forward in your journey without fear. Move forward on your feet, and not on your knees because tenure and promotion is not a reason to sell your soul. My challenge to you is this, once you are in the limelight, once you have realized your dream, stand tall, stand proud, and remember that the community and all of humanity does not exist for the sole purpose of your research. Understand that the community, in particular communities that have a long history of being taken advantaged of by researchers, require your support and advocacy. Do not enter into your pursuit of a doctoral degree thinking only of yourself...enter this journey with a sense of wonderment and amazement at the beauty of our humanity, but also a sense of outrage at the dehumanization so often experienced by certain members of our human family. It is my hope that everyone is successful in your chosen fields of study. Congratulations on all of your success.

Though Dr. Simmons will be leaving EMU, he can be reached at rsimmons9@hotmail.com.

2009 MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AND STAFF



BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): AMANDA CHILDRESS, JACINDA BUNTING, JOSIAH OSBURN, BRIAN HOLMAN, MARK WHEELER, MARY SUE STORIE, NIKKI FANTOZZI, DR. BETTY BROWN-CHAPPELL (DIR.), ANTHONY SLEDGE, LISA DENYS, CINDY RODRIGUES (ASSIST. DIR.)
MIDDLE ROW (L-R): ASHLEY DURAND, KRISTIN NEVILLE, DARA WALKER, MARIANO MARKS, KHADIJAH ABBAS, LATASHA BECKER, NIKKI HENDRICKS-BOLLING, JENNA PANOZZO, RACHEL HUTCHINS
FRONT ROW (L-R): INYANG TELFAIR, BUSHRA MALAIBARI (GA), JOSHUA LELONEK, DAVID GOMEZ, KIM FREEMAN (PROGRAM SEC.)

INTRODUCING THE 2009 SUMMER RESEARCH INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS

One of the highlights for the Celebration of Excellence was announcing the Summer Research Institute (SRI) participants. The SRI is an integral part of the Program to help students attain their goal to attend graduate school. Seminars are held for ten weeks, with topics ranging from GRE prep to research methods for individual projects. The SRI participants also have a chance to visit other schools and get their research published in the *McNair Chronicles*.

This year's participants include Kadijah Abbas, Latasha Becker, Jacinda Bunting, Janna Daniel, David Gomez, Samuel Karafotis, Kristin Neville, Jenna Panozzo, Josiah Osburn, and Mark Wheeler.

SRI participants will be conducting research on topics from biology to music.

We wish all SRI participants the best of luck on their projects!

ABOUT EMU'S MCNAIR PROGRAM

In October of 2007, Eastern Michigan University was awarded a federal grant to establish a McNair Scholars Program. The program operates concurrently with the Honors College in Starkweather Hall. Although each program is separate, students are welcomed to apply for both. Successful McNair Scholar applications are automatically forwarded to the Honors admissions officer for consideration. Applications can be found in Starkweather's entrance hall. The McNair Scholars Program offers academic advising, mentoring, and research experience to students who plan on pursuing a PhD. McNair also offers financial assistance for conducting and presenting research. The program has a yearly capacity of thirty-five students. Eligible EMU applicants must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher, completed at least 30 credits, and be a US citizen or Permanent Resident. The student must also be low-income and a first generation college student, or the student must be from an underrepresented group. Applications for fall semester are due **September 21, 2009**. More information on the eligibility requirements and application process is available in Starkweather Hall.



—Adapted from an article, previously printed in *Honorable Mentions*, written by Nicole Hillis