



EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY McNair Scholars Program 2020 Annual Newsletter

Surviving a Pandemic: Thriving Against all Odds

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D., Director, **Eastern Michigan University McNair Scholars Program**
Dr. Kimberly Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Director



**Resilience. Flexibility. Hardiness.
Toughness. Strength. Resistance.
Cohesion. Community.**

The 2019-2020 academic year put our students' best qualities to the test--and they passed with flying colors. Every aspect of the EMU McNair Scholars Program's mission was met: we exist to prepare "high-achieving undergraduates from first-generation, low-income and traditionally underrepresented homes for success in pursuing doctoral studies. Through a rigorous program of research development, academic advising, personal mentoring, and test preparation, the McNair Program assists its Scholars in achieving academic excellence and attaining their scholarly and professional goals."

All 36 McNair Scholars engaged in multiple research and scholarly experiences through the COVID-19 lockdown and into the summer. September 2019 saw our seniors presenting their McNair research at both the **EMU McNair Colloquium** and the **Heartland Research Conference** in Kansas City, MO. Our Fall semester collaborative research activity, the **McNair Team Challenge: Know Your Vote!** paired Interns (juniors) as mentors to our Cadets (sophomores) in the use of research databases, writing a literature review, and the use of digital media for research presentations. Divided into teams, the scholars developed detailed analyses of the presidential candidates and determined that the 2020 election is, indeed, critical to our future!

During the spring quarantine our Cadets, Interns, and Seniors engaged in the **McNair Common Read: Bryan Stevenson's Just Mercy**, and wrote papers on how the values exemplified by the **Equal Justice Initiative** play a role in their personal, academic, and professional choices. During the summer each Intern produced a **Graduate Admissions Portfolio** comprising a number of documents required in the graduate application process. **Dr. Arnold Fleischmann**, Emeritus Professor of Political Science, led a zoom seminar on graduate admissions and offered additional individual mentoring to our rising seniors.

Most importantly, all of our Interns completed **faculty-mentored research papers** that will be published in **Vol. 13** of the *McNair Scholars Research Journal* this fall.

Our research activities were underscored by ongoing group and individual zoom sessions targeting the emotional

challenges of life in the time of COVID-19. None of our achievements would have been possible without the generosity and support of our **faculty mentors**: Dr. Jamie Cornelius, Dr. Joan Cowdery, Dr. Brendan Fay, Dr. Jeffrey Guthrie, Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Dr. Heather Janisse, Dr. Kristin Judd, Dr. Éric Paradis, Dr. Nicholas Romerhausen, Dr. Jeffrey Schulz, and Dr. MacArthur Stewart. We send our additional **thanks to the administrators and staff** whose unwavering support provides the foundation of our success: Dr. Rhonda Longworth, Dr. James Smith, Dr. Arnold Fleischmann, Dr. Ellen Koch, Dr. Sarah Huyvaert, Professor Julia Nims, Emily Tefft, Katie Schortgen, Dr. Christine Deacons, Dr. Eric Reed, Colonel Wayne Doyle, Roderick Wallace, Josiah Pankiewicz, Susan Campbell, and Caryn Charter. We are especially grateful to our **graduate assistants**, Christopher Phanord, Alexa Druckmiller, and Cassidy Creech. With their help we have, indeed, demonstrated our **resilience, flexibility, hardiness, toughness, strength, resistance, cohesion, and above all...Community!**

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D., Director, EMU McNair

Onward to Graduate Studies!

(The student's selected graduate program is indicated in **green**)



Jaylen Taylor, Biochemistry. EMU Presidential Scholar, Honors College, McNair Scholar of the Year. Dr. Deborah Heyl-Clegg, mentor.

Doctoral admissions in Biochemistry: The Ohio State University, University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin.

Anthony Terry, Psychology. Honors College, McNair Challenger Award. Veteran, U.S. Navy, EMU Veteran Student Support Services. Dr. Ellen Koch, mentor. Master of Social Work admissions: Eastern Michigan University, Suffolk University.



Desmine Robinson, Psychology. Admissions to a Master's of Higher Education, Student Affairs Program at Eastern Michigan University; Master of Social Work programs at Oakland University, Washington University.



Kai Le, Communication Technology. Honors College. Dr. Paul Majeske, mentor. Admitted to Urban Planning programs at Eastern Michigan University, University of Michigan, Wayne State University (Deferred until Fall 2021).

Preserving Mental Health During Uncertainty

The COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide Black Lives Matter protests in response to the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor have resulted in a myriad of emotions for students and staff in our community.

In response to the immense stress caused by social injustice and the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, the McNair Scholars Program initiated a series of zoom Mental Health workshops led by EMU faculty and a McNair alumna.

The series began with Ms. Courtney Williams, LMFT,

a licensed marriage and family therapist with Enki Health and Research Systems in Long Beach, CA and 2011 alumna of the McNair Scholars Program. Her session, *COVID, Lockdown, Black Lives Matter: Managing our Feelings/Maintaining our Lives* discussed the symptoms of depression, feelings of emotional exhaustion, and the importance of seeking professional support when needed.

Dr. Nina Nabors, Rehabilitation Psychologist and former EMU faculty member facilitated a session, *McNair Women's Event: Getting Through COVID and Beyond*. EMU Psychology professor, Dr. Stephen Jefferson, held a session to address the unique concerns of men, and in particular, the emotional challenges experienced by Black men in the wake of the George Floyd killing. The sessions were well-attended and greatly appreciated by our scholars.

The McNair Scholars Program strives to provide holistic support to our students. Though we have transitioned from in-person to virtual meetings, we are dedicated to inspiring the academic and social engagement of our scholars in their quest for scholarly excellence!

Dr. Kimberly Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Director

2020 McNair Scholars Program Recognition of Excellence Awards

The EMU McNair Program recognizes the outstanding achievements in scholarship and service, and the generosity and support of individual faculty and administrators.

Scholar of the Year Award

Awarded in recognition of Promise, Perseverance and Academic Excellence.

Ms. Jaylen E. Taylor

B.S. in Biochemistry, cum laude, EMU Presidential Scholar. *Previous recipients: Victoria Fields, Alyssia Hence, Yeliani Valdez, Victoria Fisher, Shalana Chumki, Marcia Molett, Lanita Sledge & Courtney Williams*

Research of the Year Award

Awarded for the highest quality research published in the *McNair Scholars Research Journal*.

Ms. Jaylen E. Taylor

B.S. in Biochemistry, cum laude. EMU Presidential Scholar. *Previous recipients: Ashley Beals, Deborah Munganga, Dominique Canning, Rebecca Luth, Carmen Grange, Mayra Rivas & Carly Evich*

Challenger Service Award

Awarded to Scholars who have shown great commitment to community service and assisting others.

Mr. Anthony D. Terry

B.A. in Psychology, cum laude. *Previous recipients: Larry D. Borum III, Brandie Bentley, Mikki Smith, Tiffany Browne & Kryn Ambs*

Sarah H. Huyvaert Mentor of the Year Award

Awarded to the Mentor who has gone above and beyond in working with our scholars to achieve their research goals.

Dr. Deborah Heyl-Clegg, Ph.D., Professor of Chemistry and Department Head

Previous recipients: Dr. Ellen Koch, Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Dr. Lois Mahoney, Dr. Ruth Ann Armitage, Dr. Sylvia Jones & Dr. Anne Casper

Dr. Toni Stokes Jones Award

Awarded for exceptional generosity and support for the EMU McNair Scholars Program, or representation of McNair's goals.

Dr. Rhonda Kinney Longworth, Ph.D., University Provost and Executive Vice President

Previous Recipients: Dr. Arnold Fleischmann, Dr. Toni Stokes Jones, Professor Julia Nims, Kayla Boyd & Sylvia Torres

2020 Summer Research Opportunity Program Participants

Jada Childs, Future Public Health Leaders, University of Michigan
Kai Le, Summer Research Opportunity Program, University of Michigan

Eastern Michigan University McNair Scholars Research Journal
Volume 13 (2020)

The EMU McNair Scholars Research Journal is proud to publish our students' research. Published electronically at <http://commons.emich.edu/mcnair/>, the journal is available to readers worldwide. At present, articles from the journal have been downloaded over 266,482 times and are widely read in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

Brandon T. Carreathers

“Athletes’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health.”

Dr. Jeffrey Schulz, Mentor

Kylar J. Chandler

“Where We Go 1 We Go All: A Public Discourse Analysis of Qanon.”

Dr. Nicholas Romerhausen, Mentor

Jada C. Childs

“Effect of Stress on the Health of African American Women in Low-Income Neighborhoods.”

Dr. Heather Janisse, Mentor

David T. DeLisle

“Implementation of a Mechanical Vibration Control System and Electric Locking Circuit for Atomic Sensing Research.”

Dr. Éric Paradis, Mentor

Avery Dumas IV

“An Experimental Investigation of the Material Behavior of FDM PCTG Sockets.”

Dr. MacArthur Stewart, Mentor

Shannon K. Hawkins, Jr.

“A Review of Late Twentieth-Century Research on Adolescent Development in Low-Income Single-Parent Households.”

Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Mentor

Liam C. Pendleton

“Food Availability and Its Effects on Spatial Habitat Use in Breeding and Non-Breeding Red Crossbills.”

Dr. Jamie Cornelius and Dr. Kristin Judd, Mentors

Gabrielle N. Reed

“#Sayhername: Putting the “I” in Intersectionality in Black Female Social Movements.”

Dr. Nicholas Romerhausen, Mentor

Jason O. Talley

“The Impact of Social Stigmas on Sexual Health Seeking Behavior: A Review of Literature.”

Dr. Jeffrey Schulz and Dr. Joan Cowdery, Mentors

Macy E. Whitenburg

“Art Therapy as an Intervention and Its Effects on Anxiety and Depression.”

Dr. Brendan Fay, Mentor

Our current Doctoral Degree candidates include:

Rasheed Atwater, Temple University,
Africology and African-American Studies

Brandie Bentley, University of Illinois, Social Work

Dominique Canning, University of Michigan,
Linguistics

Shahana Chumki, University of Michigan, Molecular
Biology, NSF Fellowship Recipient

Carly Evich, Purdue University, Clinical Psychology

Gabriel Green, Pennsylvania State University, English
and African American and Diaspora Studies

Robert Green-Warren, Rutgers University,
Engineering

Diamond Jones, University of Iowa, Chemistry

Charae London-Terry, University of

Tennessee, Veterinary Social Work

Allante Moon, Pennsylvania State University,
Higher Education

Taylor Murphy, Michigan State University, Bio-Mo-
lecular Science

TyRhonda Smith, Southwest College of
Naturopathic Medicine and Health Sciences

Jaylen Taylor, The Ohio State University,
Biochemistry

Elisa Torres, George Mason University,
Social Work

Yeliani Valdez, The Ohio State University,
Social Work

Folayan Zheng, Nova Southwestern University,
Computer Engineering

EMU McNair Doctoral Recipients

Dr. Stephanie Hawkes, Ed.D., Wayne State University
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Dr. Rachel Hutchins, D.P.M., Barry
University, Podiatry

Dr. Michael Kimball, Psy.D., L.P., Michigan School
of Psychology; Psychologist, StressCare Behavioral
Health, Inc.

Dr. Julie Krupa, Ph.D., University of South
Florida, Criminal Justice; Assistant Professor in the
School of Criminal Justice, Michigan State University

Dr. Jasmine Lee, MSW., Ph.D., Michigan State
University, Adult and Lifelong Education;

Director of Inclusive Excellence, University of
Maryland, Baltimore County

Dr. Ashley Rowland, Ph.D., University of Colorado,
Boulder, Molecular, Cellular and Developmental
Biology; Director of Content, Codon Learning

Dr. Anthony Sparkling, Ph.D., Michigan State
University, Construction Management; Assistant
Professor of Construction, Purdue University

Dr. Dara Walker, Ph.D., Rutgers University, African
American Studies; Assistant Professor of African
American Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality
Studies, Pennsylvania State University



David DeLisle, Jason Talley, Anthony Terry, Desmine Robinson



Dr. Deborah Heyl-Clegg, Dr. Hedeel Guy-Evans, Jaylen Taylor



Desiree Drake presents her research at the EMU McNair Colloquium.



Shannon Hawkins and Brandon Carreathers at The Detroit Institute of Arts!



McNair Seniors, Anthony Terry, Cyril Yancey, Jaylen Taylor, Desiree Drake, Clayton Sigmann, Brianna Jones



2019 McNair Team Challenge with Keynote Speaker, Dr. Tiffany Caesar

Special thanks to the 2019 – 2020 EMU McNair Advisory Board

Dr. Rhonda Longworth, Provost of EMU
Dr. Calvin McFarland, Assistant Vice President
Ms. Elise Buggs, Academic Success Partnerships
Ms. Caryn Charter, Research Development
Dr. Ellene Contis, Chemistry
Col. Wayne Doyle, Veterans Student Support Services
Dr. Celeste Hawkins, Social Work
Dr. LaMarcus Howard, Disability Resources
Dr. Toni Stokes Jones, College of Education

Dr. Ellen Koch, Psychology
Dr. Harriet Lindsay, Chemistry
Ms. Julia Nims, University Library
Dr. Janet Okagbue-Reaves, Social Work
Ms. Michelle Peet, Early College Alliance
Dr. Eric Reed, Student Support Services
Ms. Temii Tellis, College of Business
Mr. Roderick Wallace, Upward Bound
Dr. Malverne Winbourne, College of Education

Congratulations!

Our newest McNair doctoral recipient is **Dr. Stephanie Hawkes, Ed.D.** Dr. Hawkes' dissertation, *Student Experiences in an Alternative College Admission Program*, was awarded in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies by Wayne State University.

Special congratulations to **Dr. Kimberly Brown, Ph.D.**, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in Urban Education, *Faring Better or Worse: A Quantitative Analysis of Student Success Outcomes of the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program at Eastern Michigan University* on June 15, 2020!

Thank you to our donors, and...
Thank you, Eastern Michigan University!

