



McNair News



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SPRING 2006

Congratulations to the following UCF McNair Scholars who graduated in Summer and Fall semesters 2005:

**Simone Chin,
Kemba Pinkston,
Heather Rozelle,
Sara Marti**

2005: A Year In Review By Ashley Green, McNair Scholar

The summer and fall of 2005 were a very busy, exciting, and lucrative time for the 2004-2005 class of Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program Scholars. In addition to their research, the scholars participated in an intense research writing course that was not only challenging and helpful, but also a lot of fun thanks to Dr. Pat Angley, the class professor.

During the 12-week course, scholars learned how to prepare proposals, literature reviews, effective and efficient abstracts, as well as write their research papers. Scholars had their plates full with weekly workshops that addressed everything from applying to graduate school to submitting research proposals to the Institutional Review Board. The students also participated in an eight-week Graduate Record Examination (GRE) preparation course. The summer concluded with trips to Penn State University and the University of California-Berkley.

The fall brought the beginning of a new school year, a winning football season for UCF and a new class of McNair Scholars. Their induction into the program was celebrated at the conclusion of McNair Day with a luncheon featuring guest speaker (and former McNair Scholar) Dr. Stephanie Evans and words of congratulations from Dean Rick Schell, Dr. Joseph Green and Provost Terry Hickey.



The new cohort of 2005-2006 Ronald E. McNair Scholars inducted on McNair Day, October 18, 2005.

The McNair Day event featured presentations by the 2004-2005 class of McNair Scholars and a special presentation by Iris Montijo, a scholar from the University of Northern

Iowa. Scholars enlightened a room filled with faculty, staff and community leaders on subjects including teachers with ADD, the Apartheid in South Africa, and the preparation of size selected gold nanoparticles using inverse micelle encapsulation.

There was also a trip to Delaware during the semester. Some scholars embarked on personal journeys in their research endeavors. Maya Alphonse presented at the Florida Association of Science Teachers (FAST) Conference and Pamela Youmans-Hernandez contributed to the 90th Annual Convention for the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). Maya Alphonse and Dr. Joseph Green also attended the McNair Symposium at North Carolina A&T in January 2006. 2005 was another great year for the UCF McNair Scholars!

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Renea and Yannick with Dr. Orlando Taylor



Renea telling a scary story at the late night bonfire

“The best part though, was meeting students from all over the country in different disciplines, who had the same drive and ambition as us, as well as some of the same fears.”



California McNair Senior Summer Camp

By Yannick Louis-Charles, McNair Scholar

Fellow McNair scholar Renea Forde and I had the great opportunity to attend this year’s McNair Senior Summer Camp in California, hosted by Cal State University - Dominguez Hills. It didn’t take us long to figure out why this was more affectionately referred to as the “Senior Boot Camp”. Our week was crammed with workshops on everything you could possibly need to know about preparing for and surviving in graduate school. Some of these workshops included “Preparing for the GRE” led by Thomas Rochon, former Executive Director of the GRE program at ETS, and “Dealing with Diversity Issues in Grad School” presented by Dr. Cortez Henderson.

For us, the highlight was getting to meet Dr. Orlando Taylor, the Dean of Graduate Admissions at Howard University, and Donald Asher, the “Dr. Phil of graduate admissions.” By the time we left the camp, we had our personal statements, curriculum vitae, list of grad schools and potential faculty mentors, as well as a wealth of financial resources. The best part though, was meeting students from all over the country in different disciplines who had the same drive and ambition as us, as well as some of the same fears. It was great to see how supportive McNair Scholars are of each other.

Of course, our week wasn’t all work. We took part in a game of GRE Jeopardy and, of course, our team tied for first place. We also visited the beautiful Lake Arrowhead resort. During the late night bonfire I made S’mores for the first time and Renea scared everyone (me, especially) with her mango tree ghost story. I definitely recommend this camp to all McNair Scholars but, just a word of caution: don’t let someone who is afraid of heights drive to the campsite. When they said it was on the mountainside, they really meant it was above cloud level, on the very top of “The Alps of Southern California”.

Gaining Confidence

By Kimberlie Saint-Louis, McNair Scholar

This past summer, I traveled to Pennsylvania State University for the 2005 McNair Summer Research Conference. I, along with four other fellow McNair Scholars from UCF, delivered oral presentations. I was prepared as could be, thanks to my mentor, Dr. Jungblut, who prepped me all the way up to the night before departure, and my McNair Research Writing Class, in which we did mock presentations and critiques. This still did not stop the butterflies from coming right before my presentation, but they went away within minutes of speaking.

The most important thing that I took from the conference was that the other 200 or so students were just as nervous as I was. We just had to be confident that we knew our research and could inform others about our topic professionally and informatively. The experience was so much better than I could have imagined. I was in Pennsylvania for approximately 3 days, roughly 72 hours, 4,320 minutes. My presentation took up only 15 minutes of those 4,320 minutes. It was that fast. I only had 15 minutes to show *myself* that I could successfully articulate my presentation to others and I did. From now on, I only need to remember my first conference to remind me that nothing is as bad as it seems.

Pictured Left: McNair Scholar Kimberlie Saint-Louis after her presentation at Penn State

McNair Day 2005

By Heather Rivers, McNair Scholar

There are so many opportunities offered to students in their years in college, but very few receive the opportunity to become a Ronald E. McNair Scholar. I was inducted into the McNair program on McNair Day, October 18, 2005. I observed the research presentations given by the knowledgeable scholars of 2004, greeted my fellow inductees, and learned from a powerful speaker what it truly means to be a McNair Scholar.

Watching the Scholars from the previous year present their research was very impacting. Their knowledge and professionalism was even somewhat intimidating; realizing that at one point, many of these students had been classmates, friends, and just fellow students. I became keenly aware that I would be doing this same thing next year. As I watched each of them present their research with such comfort and ease, I became anxious, scared, excited, and honored all at once. I knew that there was something in the “McNair factory,” that once you go in, you’ll come out changed for the better.

(...continued on back page)



McNair Scholars and Staff in Berkeley, CA (Aug '05)

Trip to the West Coast: Berkeley McNair Symposium

By Enrique Ortiz, McNair Scholar

As I was filling out the application for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Degree Program, I knew that it would be a once in a lifetime opportunity to prepare myself for entrance and success in graduate school. I did not know, however, that I would go through research boot camp during my summer and it would culminate in my participation in the 13th Annual McNair Scholars Symposium held at the University of California – Berkeley.

This past summer, three other UCF McNair scholars and I had the extreme privilege of presenting our undergraduate research at Berkeley. There were a few hundred scholars in attendance from all over the United States. While not agonizing over the imminent presentation that had to be delivered, it was nice having the opportunity to meet and listen to scholars presenting intriguing research. There was contrasting research ranging from projectile impact on aircraft materials, to an analysis of Eminem’s music, and the proof of a physical function to the trends in education of Latino children. It is inspiring to see undergraduate research that will not only affect their respective areas, but will have impact on society in a positive way.

This experience was not only beneficial because of the practice in presentation skills, but in the vast appreciation of research. It was awe inspiring to see the history that Berkeley has, but also it made me proud to see that UCF is taking many strides that a successful university has already taken and know that I am a contributor to that history. This first trip to the West Coast for the UCF McNair scholars was truly an education in culture and in life.



Enrique at Cal-Berkley 2005

“It is inspiring to see undergraduate research that will not only affect their respective areas, but will have impact on society in a positive way”

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For more information on the McNair Scholars Program, please visit: <http://www.mcnair.ucf.edu> or call (407) 823-1815

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“McNair Day 2005” by Heather Rivers (continued)

McNair Day provided the opportunity for my fellow inductees and I to meet and talk with the previous Scholars, and with each other. The luncheon allowed us to mingle and be comfortable while getting to know one another. I could tell that like me, many were proud of having family and friends present to introduce and share in our excitement. I gained the understanding that my fellow inductees were now my brothers and sisters of McNair with whom I would be spending a lot of time. We would all share in the same trials and triumphs over the next year.



Heather Rivers

The keynote speaker, Dr. Stephanie Evans, was absolutely inspiring. She, a McNair Scholar herself, is the epitome of how to be as a researcher and scholar. Her humor, professionalism and dedication are what I consider to be the main ingredients for her success. Like her, I want to be myself and love whatever it is I choose to research. Not only be myself, but be an improved, stronger, more experienced self. To be all of these things, she emphasized the importance of keeping the McNair program in prospective. Being a McNair scholar is an honor, not just a privilege. It takes hard work, focus, drive, and all that one can muster out of themselves to be all that they desire.

I was more than honored to know that the administrative officials were proud of me, and shared that they wanted the best for me. To receive advice and words of encouragement from Provost Hickey, Dean Schell, and Dean Bishop, to name a few, was an honor. By the time I walked to the front of the room to be recognized as a McNair Scholar, I already knew what the moment meant. I had seen the research presentations, got to know my fellow scholars, heard the wise words of administrative officials and Dr. Stephanie Evans. From that point on, everything would shape me into a more knowledgeable, experienced, proud professional. “Once a McNair Scholar, a McNair Scholar for life”. The door was now opened.