

S U M M E R 2 0 0 9

THE

McNAIR CHALLENGER

University of Montevallo

Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program

Faculty Mentors

Will Davis • Dr. Jenifer Moore
Dallas Hanbury • Dr. Ruth Truss
Steve Hallman • Dr. Harold Hamilton
Stephen Hyde • Dr. Mike Hardig
Shernita Little • Dr. Paul Mahaffey
Dasha Maye • Dr. Kristen Gilbert
Mya McGee • Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance
Candyce Osburn • Dr. Hollie Cost
Oriana Padron • Dr. Karen Graffeo
Erica Russell • Dr. Elizabeth Thrower
Jennifer Travis-Scott • Dr. Jason Newell
Naquela Webster • Dr. Susan Thompson
Tiffany Westry • Dr. Susan Thompson

During the summer component, each Scholar conducts intensive research under the guidance of a Faculty Mentor who commits to the Scholar in the fall and assists in preparing the proposal for undergraduate research in the spring. UM's Faculty Mentors go above and beyond in not only supervising the Scholars, but mentoring them as well in preparation for graduate studies.

Pictured below is Dr. Jenifer Moore with McNair Scholar Will Davis, Education.



McNair Scholars Present Research at Niagara Falls

Pictured above: Stephen Hyde, Biology; Jennifer Travis-Scott, Social Work; Dasha Maye, Psychology; Dallas Hanbury, History; and Steve Hallman, Business, were accompanied by Director, Dr. Tracy Payne to the National McNair Conference sponsored by the University at Buffalo in July. The Scholars did have some free time away from the research presentations and dynamic speakers to see the magnificent Niagara Falls (even from underneath!), catch a glimpse of Canada, and explore some of the trails of the Niagara Gorge.

Dive Into Graduate School!

GRE Test Strategies

Monday, Oct. 5
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Comer Auditorium

Please sign-up

Graduate School 501

Monday, Oct. 5
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Wills 200

Refreshments Served

Graduate School Expo

Tuesday, Oct. 6
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Samford University

Transportation Available

McNAIR SCHOLARS

The following excerpts are from a few of the Summer 2009 Scholars. Please read what they have to share about their McNair experience.

DALLAS HANBURY, HISTORY

Reflecting on my experience of having participated in the McNair Scholars Program for two years, I realize how fortunate I have been in being allowed to be a part of something so beneficial and valuable. The McNair program has done much in the way of preparing me for graduate school, especially in the form of doing original research and then having to present it to an audience. There is nothing more exciting than defending your work in front of Professors and passing their approval, and there is no better feeling than working closely with a member of the teaching faculty and library faculty while conducting your research; it truly makes you a better student. The McNair Scholars Program shaped my view of graduate school, already a reality, into a much sharper, defined reality, and for that I am grateful.



DASHA MAYE, PSYCHOLOGY

I had the most fun on our excursions to different conferences and cultural events. I gained from our excursions experiences I might have never had and got to know my fellow scholars along the way. From graduate school visits, conferences, to just having dinner, I had the opportunity of seeing my fellow scholars at their personal and professional best and had a great time doing it.

Going to the McNair Conference in Buffalo, NY was a wonderful experience. First of all I had never been to New York so that alone was a definitely a plus. On top of that I got to share my research with fellow scholars. It is very encouraging to present in a different venue and receive validating and positive feedback from your scholastic peers. I'm not only appreciative of the opportunity to present but the chance to see the falls. Our trip would not have been complete without a trip to Niagara Falls. Words and pictures cannot truly depict the beauty and power of the falls but I know it is an experience I'll never forget.



CANDYCE OSBURN, FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES

The summer program was very beneficial to me. I really enjoyed the Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (SAEOPP) conference at Georgia State, where I was able to see others present and improve my own presentation, when I presented my own McNair research. I spent a lot of time in the McNair office while working on my research and I was able to bond with the other scholars and the staff. The staff were very helpful to me during the summer and throughout the year; they kept me motivated, let me talk about what I was passionate about, and allowed me to use resources that I don't usually have access to.



MYA MCGEE, COMMUNICATION SCIENCE

I have thoroughly enjoyed my McNair summer experience. Not only was I fortunate enough to visit some of the top graduate schools in the South (and these visits include the Auburn, Alabama, and UGA visits in the Fall and Spring semesters), but I have also learned a great deal about the research process. I have learned how to create surveys and how to collect test subjects for research. I have learned that research can be difficult at times; however the end results is very rewarding. Most of all, I was able to share this experience with my fellow McNair Scholars.





ERICA RUSSELL, MUSIC EDUCATION

The summer was both challenging and exciting! This was my first opportunity ever to live on campus and have the experience of independence. It was very nice and gave me a greater sense of who I am and the types of decisions I can potentially make for the success in my life. I loved how I could wake up in the morning and conveniently head to the caf, swipe my card, and dig in...this is a beautiful thing, even at lunch and dinner. I will never forget the bond that was shared between myself and my fellow scholars. I have laughed myself silly and spent time getting to know others outside of my regular contacts; they are great!!! Even the "sneaky pictures" done provided a chance for me to see myself as I was and to love and appreciate who I am. I must admit, I got a little attached and sad that we had to separate as a group and go back to our daily lives...everybody became a sister or a brother to me. Hey, I even got the chance to expand my experiences with the boat ride performance and the "frustrating but okay" banquet performance. I will never forget those two! I got the opportunity to collaborate with my cousin and spend time with my sister throughout this

process as well. What a blessing that is. Then there's graduate school...WOW. I had the opportunity, it seemed to spend a wonderful, all expenses paid vacation with wonderful people and even got to visit graduate schools to learn about programs I was interested in?!?!? Then we got to do the "Dave and Buster's" scene and other "enriching" activities as well?!?!? IS THIS A DREAM!!!!!!!!!!!! I can say overall this program has helped me to expand my social interactions with others, strive to reach my fullest potential in my life (graduate school or not), and who am I kidding, how to be waaaaaaay more organized and self-disciplined. The informative seminars, the unlimited advice from many others, and all of the support from the McNair staff, McNair Scholars (as well as the thumbs-up from my family and friends) have shaped me into a better individual.

SHERNITA LITTLE, ENGLISH

The summer component of the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program caused me to view things in a more optimistic manner. There were times when I felt that things were more challenging than I needed or wanted them to be. However, I remembered the encouraging words which the scholars from UAH and Vanderbilt took time to share with me. I also had a motto of my own that I often referred to during tough times. That motto included the words, It Only Takes A *Little* to Get a Lot Done! I think that motto allowed me to serve as my own inspiration as well as to encourage other scholars. While being on the cruise tour in Tennessee, a musician stated, "Wherever you go...there you are!" That statement was funny at the time, but it caused me to think of the fact that I cannot depend on anyone else to get me to where I would like to go in life. I can also be where I take myself on this journey. So, the Summer component taught me several things about myself, how I am able to learn best, and what I am capable of doing even at the most challenging and most fearful moments.

My Library Mentor is definitely someone who I appreciated during my research project. Ms. Patsy Sears introduced the term of passing to me and she helped to make my research far more interesting to present to others. As I explored that term and the idea of racial masking, I gained more insight on the Creole culture (those who passed for white and those who decided not to pass, but rather mask their blackness at times when it was necessary). I also had more information to share as I contributed to conversations I had with New Orleanian residents. So, not only am I grateful for Dr. Mahaffey, my Faculty mentor, but I am grateful for my Library Mentor as well. I think if only students explained their topics to their library mentors as they gain an understanding of their research, they can receive the assistance they need in order to reach their goals successfully!



EXPLORE UM: DISCOVERING HIDDEN TREASURES

During the summer, the Scholars had the opportunity to explore some areas of the University of Montevallo they may have little knowledge of or exposure to. We appreciate the time and effort of Ms. Racheal Banks, Alumni Office; Mr. Billy Cannon, Student Activity Center; Dr. Mike Hardig, Ebenezer Swamp; and Dr. Michael Patton, Shepherd Observatory.



Dr. Michael Patton and McNair Scholars endure the HEAT to check out the Shepherd Observatory

*Ms. Racheal Banks, Alumni Director
Mr. Billy Cannon, SAC Director
McNair Scholars get a crash course at the SAC*

Dr. Mike Hardig provides the McNair Scholars with a tour of Ebenezer Swamp



Guest Speaker: Carol Vance, McNair Alumna



Dasha Maye, Scholar of the Year



Steve Hallman, Best Overall Research Project



Candyce Osburn, Carol Hodges Memorial Award



Special Music: Erica Russell



Tiffany Westry, Best Presentation



Erica Russell, Best Presentation

Banquet and Awards Ceremony Highlights



GRADUATE SCHOOL VISITS

Pictured above are the McNair Scholars during visits to Tennessee State University, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Alabama at Huntsville

Each summer, prior to the research internship, the McNair Scholars spend a few days visiting graduate schools...talking with currently enrolled graduate students and graduate faculty who can share unique perspectives with them. This summer, the UM Scholars visited the University of Alabama at Huntsville,

Vanderbilt University, Belmont University, Tennessee State University, and Middle Tennessee State University. As Scholars prepare to graduate, they participate in an exit interview with the Program Director. Overwhelmingly, one of the top-rated activities indicated by Scholars at that time is exposure to graduate programs.



Alabama Shakespeare Festival
Comedy of Errors



McNair Research Conference
Georgia State University



Hoover Crescent
Islamic Center



University at Buffalo McNair Conference Stephen Hyde, Senior Biology Major

The National Conference in Buffalo was a rewarding experience. For one it was very nice to meet Scholars from other schools around the country. It was also very interesting to hear about the research of people outside of your school. This was a great time to network with these people and their mentors. The graduate school fair also allowed time to look at the some programs a bit closer. The poster presentation was a great way to see how other students organized their research for this. The conference pointed out key points for me to remember about presenting. I sat in on one presentation that made me cringe. The most common word was "umm" and the whole flow was never really established; she did not seem familiar at all with her subject matter. The reverse of this was certainly true and those that could deviate off of their slides certainly helped to demonstrate that they knew what they were talking about. I think these were both important lessons learned in going and listening to others.

FACULTY MENTOR SPOTLIGHTS

Dr. Harold "Harry" Hamilton

Like many doctoral students, I had a major professor that had such a profound influence on my educational philosophy that I still think about his insights 30 years later. Dr. Frank Edens was truly a gentle soul that used his Texas farm-boy sensibility to help me understand the big picture. He told me that one of the main endeavors of a good professor was to be a cheerleader. Students had the ability to think for themselves, they just needed someone to "cheer" them on to success. Never have I used this concept more than when I was mentoring Mr. Steven Hallman as a McNair Scholar. Steven came to me with a passion to learn, all I had to do was tell him to follow his passion to a structured conclusion in his research. My most common task in my meetings with Mr. Hallman was simply to listen to his problems and encourage him to apply the solution he had already developed by himself; I "cheered" him on to believe in his own instincts. It was also a special treat to meet the different student scholars from across campus and to be part of the "cheering" gallery for their fine work. The University of Montevallo's McNair Scholars Program represents the ideal of nurturing undergraduate education at its best and it was an honor to be associated with the program.



Dr. Ruth Truss



My experience with the McNair Scholars Program spans about six years and five scholars. Based on the Undergraduate Research Program available to all University of Montevallo students, the McNair Program allows for the expansion of the academic aspects of research and provides as well opportunities to become better acquainted with not only your own scholar but also the other scholars in the program through social gatherings. The aspects of spending one-on-one time, working through a research problem, guiding both research and writing make participation in the McNair Program rewarding for faculty. Seeing the students mature scholastically and having the ability to work with the student during the year-long program lead to excellent contact and understanding with the student, generating relationships that remain long after graduation takes the student away from the physical confines of campus. The program, in fact, provides the type of experience that one could wish for all University of Montevallo students.

Dr. Susan Thompson

I have been a McNair mentor for almost as many years as I have been at Montevallo -- almost since the program began here. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with a variety of scholars. Each one has a special place in my heart, and I am so proud of them for their accomplishments. Several of my scholars have gone on to graduate school, and this is especially gratifying to me as a teacher. The McNair Program is one of the reasons I enjoy teaching at Montevallo. It's really what Montevallo is all about -- personal attention to individual students, sharing research knowledge with students, and planting that seed that will flower when they pursue graduate degrees and have research agendas of their own. These students are especially deserving. The McNair Program does a first-rate job of selecting the best students who really need this opportunity.



Dr. Jason Newell



As a new professor at UM, I was both surprised and honored when Jennifer Travis-Scott asked that I mentor her McNair research this summer. I was eager to work with such a bright and pleasant student who had a vested interest in learning more about a research area that is important to me. Jennifer spent her summer doing research on veterans with PTSD and the vicarious effects of this illness on marital, familial, and social systems. I was most impressed when she asked to get an early start by reading books and articles during the spring semester. She made several trips to my office for books and articles carrying them around campus and taking copious notes. She eventually turned her hours of reading, annotating, and note-taking into an impressive paper, which we both found very rewarding. The process of conducting research is cumbersome and Jennifer did a good job at taking a first step at understanding how important and rewarding it can be, especially when you are truly interested in the problem and population you are studying. In many ways this experience was growth promoting for both Jennifer and myself. The opportunity to mentor a student as they begin their journey in both the practice and research worlds was most rewarding for me. It is my hope that Jennifer's research experience will better prepare her for whatever path she chooses in practice or continued education. I would love to see Jennifer go on to graduate school and specialize in trauma work with veterans' and their families. The families and greater social systems of veterans are often overlooked, so someone with Jennifer's skills could truly make a difference in this population.

••• SUMMER SNAPSHOTS •••



Left: Oriana Padron wins big at Dave & Buster's!



Right: Will Davis, Dasha Maye, & Dallas Hanbury on the General Jackson Showboat in Nashville, TN



Left: McNair Scholars at Dave & Buster's in Nashville, TN



Right: Tiffany Westry and Naquela Webster at the Professional Etiquette Luncheon



Left: Dr. Carl Williams, University of Alabama Graduate Admissions, explains the graduate school process to the Scholars



Right: Faculty Mentor Mixer – Luau Style!



Left: McNair Scholars host the Upward Bound Bridge Students in a mentoring mixer



Right: McNair Scholars breathe a sigh of relief after the summer research presentations!



Left: Program Coordinator, Tonya Giddens and Director, Tracy Payne, enjoy the historic ghost tour in Nashville, TN



Right: Taking a break from the University at Buffalo Conference to enjoy Niagara Falls

McNAIR STAFF

Director: Dr. Tracy Payne (bottom right)

Program Coordinator: Ms. Tonya Giddens (bottom middle)

Office Manager: Welcome Ms. Lynn Adkins (bottom left)

Summer Graduate Assistant: Alumnus Ms. McCherri Tarver (middle right)

Summer Student Assistant: Laura Handley (top right)

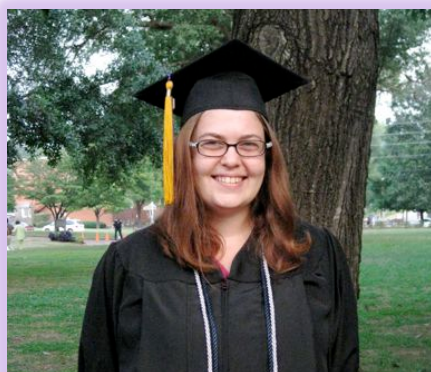
Happy Summer!



August 2009 Graduation!



Director Tracy Payne with Steve Hallman, Business Administration



*Jessica Moseley, English
McNair Scholar, Summer 2008*



Faculty Mentor Dr. Harold Hamilton with Steve Hallman, Business Administration



*Congratulations McNair Scholars!!!
Best wishes for a fabulous future!*



*Montevallo Master Will Davis &
Student Trustee Candyce Osburn*



*Tiffany Westry & Naquela Webster,
Mass Communication*