

The Challenger

The Newsletter of the MU McNair Scholars Program

April / May 2010

21st Annual McNair Scholars Conference

On April 17th, the culmination of over 280 hours of research resulted in oral and poster presentations by the 2009-2010 McNair Scholars. Topics ranged from financial literacy of college students to the calibration of an infrared pyrometer. They also included such health related and history related topics as advertising techniques for medical tourism, and black marriages in Boone Count, MO.

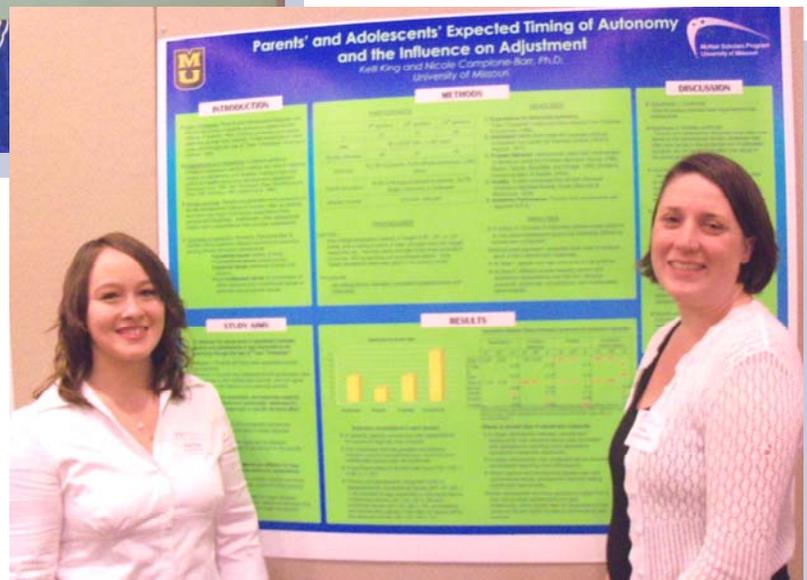


Left: McNair Scholar, Jaqui Rogers presents her research on the junior high students transitioning into high school English.

"The variety of topics and the dedication and passion the students put into their research was very evident," said McNair Director, NaTashua Davis. "I always learn something new each year."

"I could feel myself physically shaking as began to present at the McNair conference," explained McNair Scholar Sydnea Redwine, "However, presenting the results I had been working to procure over the past year and *finally* concluding my presentation brought me an unparalleled sense of accomplishment! Before the McNair program, I never would have imagined research could bring such fulfillment!"

In addition to the 17 oral presentations, the scholars also presented their work in poster form. "Doing my poster was actually a lot more simple than I thought it would be," said McNair Scholar Kelli King. "When I was putting in all of the information, I just went through each part of my paper and took out the most important



Below: McNair Scholar, Kelli King (right) and her mentor, Dr. Nicole Campione-Barr, pose by her research poster examining parents and adolescents adjustments.

things and paraphrased it. I actually really liked formatting it and experimenting with bright colors."

"Apparently I wanted my poster to stand out, because a lot of people that see it are surprised at how bright it is!"

The luncheon provided an opportunity for the program and scholars to thank the faculty members for their diligent role as mentors to the scholars. Not only do mentors assist in conducting academic research, they also help the scholars navigate the graduate school process. Mentors also see this as an opportunity to (continued on next page)



McNair Scholars Conference 2010 (continued)

introduce students to the world of academia, often times going far beyond the traditional student-teacher roles.

“Dr. Brekhus has been great. He’s helped me find my self-motivation for graduate school. He guides me and has high expectations of me that force me to stretch my potential,” says McNair Scholar Ryan Torack. “He’s always there to talk to and to make sure I know what I need to get done for my research and my graduate applications.”

Many parents were also able to attend this year and see their fruits of their child’s year long labor.

“My mother said she really enjoyed it,” McNair Scholar Ashley Price said. “She was interested in what everyone was doing. My participation really made her feel proud.”

After submitting a final research paper to the program, six scholars will be selected by an editorial review board for inclusion in the eighteenth volume of the *MU McNair Scholars Journal*.



McNair Scholar Solida Wise and her mentor, Joan Hermsen, examined how women construct their social identity in terms of hegemonic femininity on facebook.



McNair Scholar Sydnea Redwine and her mentor Lori Franz, receive a graduation honor cord and certificates of appreciation from McNair Program Advisor, Jeremy Bloss.

McNair Conference Special Thanks To:

- Brian Booton, Norma Jackson and Veronica Medina for evaluating the oral presentations at the conference.
- Robin Walker and Mike Zweifel of the MU Graduate School for their assistance with printing the research posters.
- 2008-2009 McNair Scholars Janine Ingram and Brittany Smotherson for providing time keeping and photography of the event.
- And a continuing thank you to the mentors for all the work they’ve done with the scholars this year.

Scholar Spotlight: Ashley McDonald

During my sophomore year here at Mizzou I chose to apply for the McNair Scholars Program. At the time I wasn't sure what all this would entail but I knew it would be beneficial. Now as a graduating senior the benefits I have gotten from this program have far surpassed my expectations.

My junior year I conducted independent research with Assistant Professor, Dr. Cheryl Offutt, in the Department of Educational, School and Counseling Psychology. My research project was titled, Differences between On-Campus and Extended Campus Living. In this project I investigated differences between students living in on-campus traditional housing, Stafford and Cramer Hall and students in the newly opened extended campus locations, Tiger Diggs and Mizzou Quads. Specifically, we measured each group on their feelings towards their housing situation, towards the university, and their involvement on campus. Through collaboration with Residential Life, the McNair Staff, and my mentor, I was able to successfully execute this project. I was able to present this work through a poster and oral presentation at the annual McNair Scholar's Conference last April.

I am truly grateful
for my participation in this program

Since completing my project last spring, I have continued to stay in contact with the McNair office as I prepared for graduate applications. In addition to my undergraduate research through the McNair program, I also took "Preparing to be TA" class to better prepare me for a potential graduate teaching assistantship position. Both of these actions have helped me stand out as a graduate school candidate.



2008-2009 McNair Scholar Ashley McDonald meets with her mentor, Dr. Cheryl Offutt, while conducting her research.

Now as my senior year winds down, I am finalizing graduate school plans. I applied to University of Kentucky, Loyola University Chicago, and the University of Missouri. After my decision to interview at Loyola and MU, I was able to use skills learned from the McNair program regarding graduate school decisions.

I received offers from both Loyola and MU, but because of my fit with the School Psychology program here at Mizzou, and after receiving the Thurgood Marshall Fellowship which provides me with full funding for my Master's degree, I have decided to continue my graduate education here. Looking back at all the help the McNair program and staff gave me, from the GRE prep course to a computer when mine crashed, I am truly grateful for my participation in this program and thank them for giving me this opportunity!



Scholars Continue Presenting

Recently, Kelli King and Ashley Shaw presented their poster at the “2010 Life Science Week” conference. Kelli also presented her poster at the “2010 Psychology Day” poster session.

In New Orleans, Louisiana, Devin Woodson participated in a roundtable discussion where he detailed his research at the 34th Annual National Conference for Black Studies.

On April 23rd McNair Scholar Michael Schrantz presented his poster, “Outside the Barrio: Latino/a Elected Officials in non-Latino Areas” at the 2010 Midwest Political Science Association annual meeting in Chicago.



Last October, 2008-2009 McNair Scholar Christopher Kirkendall presented his continuing McNair research at the IEEE Sensors international conference in New Zealand.

Several scholars including Dakota Raynes, Amanda Sturm, Braydon Medlin, Sydnea Redwine, Kelli King, Ashley Shaw, and Christopher Kirkendall presented their poster at the “2010 Undergraduate Research and Creative



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