Scholars attend WAEOPP Senior Retreat

In late September, three 2012-2013 McNair Scholars, Paulos Mengsteab, Carrie McLinley, and Stacy Stewart, attended the Wisconsin Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel Annual McNair/SSS Retreat at the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. Accompanying them were McNair Director, NaTashua Davis, and Advisor Jeremy Bloss.

The retreat, led by one of the foremost authorities on the graduate school admissions process, Donald Asher, provided students with insight and information on the specifics of applying to graduate school. Topics from how to select graduate schools to apply to, tips on writing a personal statement, knowing the graduate application process and how to get graduate school paid for, pushed students to begin their graduate school applications. “Mr. Asher really helped me wrap my mind around how I want to write my personal statement,” said scholar Stacy Stewart. “I now have a better understanding of what I should and shouldn’t include.” Additionally, students were able to meet with other college students from across the country and learn of the large network that TRiO programs create.

The retreat also gave staff the opportunity to find new tips and information to bring back to the rest of the MU McNair Scholars. “While the process has generally stayed the same, it’s always a good idea to take a fresh look at what we’re doing and see more and possibly better ways of getting students the information,” said Advisor, Jeremy Bloss. “Already we implemented some of these new ideas into our own senior retreat held on October 13th.”

While returning from Wisconsin, the group stopped at “The House on the Rock” a complex of architecturally unique rooms built by Alex Jordan, Jr from 1959-1985. The structure sits on Deer Shelter Rock, a 60 foot tall column of rock that juts out from the nearby forest. The students and staff were able to tour the winding Gate House and Mill House as well as one of the Japanese gardens. The houses featured antiques as well as automated musical instruments playing a variety of songs. The highlight of the tour was the Infinity Room, which juts 218 feet off of Deer Shelter Rock and contains over 3,000 windows.

See page 2 for a full listing of the 2012-2013 McNair Scholars.
On Thursday, October 18th Scholars submitted their research proposals. Scholars are working on their a review of literature. They have already attended workshops discussing how to conduct a literature search and how to use bibliographical software. A final draft of the review of literature is due December 6th.
Notes on Networking and Etiquette

As scholars travel to academic conferences, complete with receptions and multi-course meals, these tips on etiquette are becoming more and more helpful. Below are a few more points that will assist in the ever expanding events scholars find themselves attending.

- Respond to invitations and RSVPs promptly. Even if you’re unable to attend, let the person or organization know your intentions.
- Be aware of dress codes for events. Check with someone familiar with the event to know what you should wear.
- Place your name tag on the right hand side of your body. This way when someone shakes your hand, their eye goes straight up your arm to your nametag.
- Avoid discussing politics or other controversial topics with people you’ve just met. You don’t know their entire background and can’t be certain that what you say won’t alienate them. Keep to safe topics such as the event you’re attending.
- When being served at a table, wait for everyone to receive their meal or dessert before you begin.
- When looking at your place setting think of a BMW. The bread plate is to your left, your meal plate is in the middle, and your water is to the right.
- Another tip for place setting: touch your thumb to your middle finger on both hands. This makes your left hand into a “b” and your right hand into a “d”. You’re now pointing to your bread plate and your drink. Make sure to do this inconspicuously.
- Use your silverware starting with the farthest from your plate. You may have a salad fork, a shrimp fork, and a main course fork. They are placed in order that you will use them. The utensil above your plate is reserved for the dessert.
- When attending a reception where you may have to eat standing up. Hold everything in your left hand, as illustrated above, allowing your right hand free to shake hands with others or to eat. To do this, place the plate between your middle and index finger and your drink between your thumb and index finger. Finally, lay the napkin over your pinky.
- Take smaller than normal bites of food. You’re not there to gorge yourself. Take your time eating and use the event for your networking needs.
- Don’t overcrowd your plate at buffet meals. Only take enough that you can easily manage.

[Special thanks to Travis Tucker with Bleu Restaurant]

MU McNair Fall Highlights

Workshop/Seminars: Scholars have participated in several workshops that concentrated on the entire graduate school admissions procedure and the process of conducting academic research.

GRE Prep Sessions: Scholars developed test-taking strategies and reviewed the subjects covered by the Graduate Record Examination. In addition, scholars received tips and feedback on the analytical writing section of the exam.

Research Proposal: Scholars introduced their research question and sketched out a detailed plan as to how they intend to carry out their research or scholarly activity.

Senior Retreat: Graduating scholars received in-depth, hands-on assistance in completing their graduate school applications and received helpful tips from guest speakers and past scholars on the overall process.

Etiquette Dinner: Scholars learned the proper protocol of conference dinners and receptions. In addition scholars learned techniques for networking.

Research Seminar: Scholars received instruction and feedback on the research process and the research proposal.
The 20th edition of the *MU McNair Journal* is now available! This journal includes six of the manuscripts from the 2011-2012 Scholars. The work presented in this journal is the culmination of over 280 hours of research that each scholar conducted. Their final papers were reviewed and selected by an editorial review board for inclusion in the journal. The research titles from all 18 scholars conducting research are also noted.

The Fall 2012 *MU McNair Journal* can be found online at [http://mcnair.missouri.edu/journals.php](http://mcnair.missouri.edu/journals.php) or by requesting a copy at the McNair office. Previous publications are also available online.

Congratulations to everyone selected!

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