


The Challenger

The Newsletter of the MU McNair Scholars Program

May 2008

Scholars Present Research at 19th Annual McNair Conference & Luncheon

On April 19th, over 275 hours of research culminated in oral and poster presentations by the 2008-2009 McNair Scholars. The fields researched represented a wide range of topics, from engineering to psychology and geological sciences to economics. Attendees included MU campus administrators, faculty members, graduate students, staff members and scholars' family.

"One of the most exciting aspects of this year's McNair Conference was the support of all the family members," said McNair Director, NaTashua Davis. "We had parents and siblings come from as far away as St. Louis, Chicago and Mexico City, Mexico."

Half-way between the 19 oral presentations the audience also viewed poster presentations of the scholars' work. "I really liked how my poster turned out and sharing it with my parents and grandmother," McNair Scholar, David Aguayo stated. "They thought it really displayed my personality, time, effort and skill that went into my research."

The luncheon provided an opportunity for the program and scholars to acknowledge and thank the faculty members for their diligent role as mentors to the scholars. Not only do mentors assist in the sometimes daunting task of conducting academic research, they also helped the scholars navigate the graduate school process.

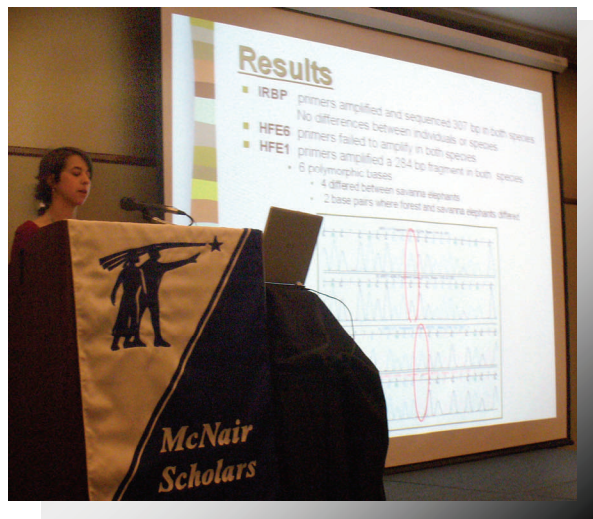
Mentors also see this as an opportunity to expand the scholar, often times going far beyond the traditional student-teacher roles. "My mentor, Dr. Cockrell, helped me develop as a whole person over the course of this program," said McNair Scholar, Brittany Smotherson.

"My mentor was outstanding, his availability and dedication were second to none," added McNair Scholar, Miriam Galenas regarding her mentor Dr. Alan Whittington.

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

"Before you can make a dream come true, you must first have one."

Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D.



Diana Ortiz presents her research.

McNair Staff

NaTashua Davis
Director

Jeremy Bloss
Program Coordinator

Darlene Dixon
Program Assistant



Scholars Research Topics

The McNair Scholars are a diverse group of students representing a diverse group of topics. Below is the research presented at the 19th Annual McNair Scholars Conference.

David Aguayo, *Secondary Education*, “Latina/o Newcomers in Missouri: *Cultural Adaptation and Ethnic Identity*”

Mentor: **Lisa Flores, Ph.D.**

Valeska Araujo, *Philosophy & Economics*, “Differential Effects of the Components of Higher Education Expenditure on U.S. State Economic Growth”

Mentor: **Bradley Curs, Ph.D.**

Brittani Brown, *Psychology*, “Parent Communication with Teachers and Child Involvement”

Mentor: **Michael Lambert, Ph.D.**

Michelle Clark, *Communication Science & Disorders*, “The Saliency of Nouns and Verbs in Speech to Toddlers”

Mentor: **Judith Goodman, Ph.D.**

Sean Crockett, *Chemical Engineering*, “The Use of Highly Nanoporous Carbon in Batteries”

Mentor: **Galen Suppes, Ph.D.**

Miriam Galenas, *Geological Sciences*, “Transport Properties of Viscosity of Mid-Ocean Ridge Basalt from East Pacific Rise”

Mentor: **Alan Whittington, Ph.D.**

Danielle Graef, *Psychology*, “Sensory Decline as a Mediating Factor in Age-Related Differences in Associative Memory”

Mentor: **Moshe Naveh-Benjamin, Ph.D.**

Jimmie Jones, *Business*, “Student-Athlete or Athlete Student: *Role Identity Crisis of College Athletes*”

Mentor: **Lori Franz, Ph.D.**

Kamara Jones, *Journalism*, “Media Lynching On the Campaign Trail: *The Use of Race in Political Ads, 1988-2006*”

Mentor: **Carol Anderson, Ph.D.**

Lindsey Lanfersieck, *English*, “The Manifestation of Death in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Gothic Fiction”

Mentor: **John Evelev, Ph.D.**

Tracey Latimore, *Psychology*, “Parent-Adolescent Relationships, Sibling Ordinal Status, and Adolescent Adjustment”

Mentor: **Nicole Campione-Barr, Ph.D.**

Olga Mafotsing Fopoussi, *Biological Sciences*, “Understanding the Mechanism of Inhibition of HIV-Reverse Transcriptase by 4'ethynyl-2-fluoro-deoxyadenosine”

Mentor: **Stefan Sarafianos, Ph.D.**

Renee Mayes, *Middle School Education*, “Multicultural Competencies among School Counselor Trainees”

Mentor: **Michael Mobley, Ph.D.**

Kelly Mottaz, *Fisheries & Wildlife*, “Enhancing Food-size Sunfish Production by Rearing Mostly-male Bluegill Groups and Controlling Social Costs”

Mentor: **Robert Hayward, Ph.D.**

Diana Ortiz, *Biological Sciences*, “Genetic Variation Associated With Adaptive Traits in the African Forest (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) and Savanna Elephants (*L. africana*)”

Mentor: **Lori Eggert, Ph.D.**

Tamela Smith, *Anthropology*, “The Impact of Prior and Concurrent Exposure to Other Infectious Diseases on Variability in the 1918-19 Flu Epidemic on the Island of Newfoundland”

Mentor: **Lisa Sattenspiel, Ph.D.**

Brittany Smotherson, *Middle School Education*, “Closing the Gap: *A Teacher's Pedagogy and Lower SES Student Success*”

Mentor: **Karen Cockrell, Ph.D.**

Jennifer Stetler, *Animal Sciences & Biochemistry*, “Role of Cyclooxygenase-1 during the Immunological Response in Lyme Arthritis”

Mentor: **Charles Brown, Ph.D.**

Catera Wilder, *Biological Engineering*, “Development of an Electrospun Degradable Adhesion Barrier”

Mentor: **Shelia Grant, Ph.D.**

Thank you to all Workshop Presenters

The McNair Scholars Program would not be as successful without the help of the many faculty, staff and graduate students that present various workshops to our scholars. A special thank you to those who presented workshops to the during the 2007-2008 school year including: Dr. Carol Anderson, Mary Barile, Dr. Debi Bell, Pushpajit Bhulla, Rachel Brekhus, Joy Daggs, Nila Emerich, Cristi Ford, Jamie Lynn Garrett, Stephanie Golda, Terrence, Dan Hanneken, Stanley Ikpe, Norma Jackson, Dr. George Justice, Roberta Knipp, Lea Lichty, Karen Mitchell, Dr. Michael Mobley, Dr. Von Pittman, Dr. Peggy Placier, Mariana Quinones, Sheriece Sadberry, Dr. Peter Tipton, Dr. Barbara Williamson and Dr. Handy Williamson.

Scholars exciting summer and fall plans:

David Aguayo will be continuing his research with the MU Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (MUURS) this summer.

This summer **Tracey Latimore** will be studying abroad in Spain.

Miriam Galenas is spending this summer at NASA's Johnson Space Center as part of the Lunar Planetary Institute's Summer Internship Program.

Kamara Jones has received a full fellowship to study African American and African Studies at The Ohio State University.

Gates Millennium Scholar **Renee Mayes** will be attending the University of Maryland—College Park to pursue a Master's degree in School Counseling.

After performing field work in animal behavior and conservation, **Diana Ortiz** will begin pursuing a graduate degree in the same field.

During the summer, **Tamela Smith** will work as a research intern at the University of Arizona. She'll then pursue a graduate degree in Biological Anthropology at Arizona State University, which awarded her the Graduate College Doctoral Enrichment Scholarship.

Brittany Smotherson's summer plans include participating in the EMERGE summer research program here at MU.

Jennifer Stetler will be continuing her research endeavors with Vanderbilt's Summer Academy.

McNair Seniors, sign up for GS 4010: Preparing to be a T.A.

Being a teaching assistant can be an important part of being a graduate student. In conjunction with the McNair Scholars Program, scholars can enroll in GS 4010: Preparing to be a Teaching Assistant. The course is designed for senior McNair Scholars, to prepare for the responsibilities and role of being a teaching assistant.

This course makes a McNair Scholar even more attractive to graduate programs by allowing the scholar to develop their skills as educators. Students will gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of teaching assistants via observation, reading, practice and discussion of course topics.

Scholars Continue to Present



The McNair Scholars Conference is not the only opportunity that McNair Scholars have to present. Students have already taken advantage of various other activities and conferences.

On April 18th Tracey Latimore, left, presented her poster at the 2008 Psychology Day held in McAlester Hall. Diana Ortiz and Tamela Smith also presented their poster at the Missouri Life Sciences Week on April 16th at the Bond Life Science Center.

In addition, several McNair Scholars participated in the 2008 Spring Undergraduate Achievements and Creative Forum. One scholar, Lindsey Lanfersieck, won the Arts & Humanities category for the 2008 Chancellor's

Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research. Valeska Araujo received an honorable mention in her category, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The Challenger

McNair Scholars Program
536 Clark Hall
University of Missouri-Columbia
Columbia MO 65211