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Spring  
2016

Winthrop University

# MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Newsletter

## TRiO

RONALD E. MCNAIR  
POST-BACCALAUREATE  
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program is a federally-funded TRIO program that prepares first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented undergraduates to be successful in graduate school.

Winthrop's McNair Scholars Program includes, but is not limited to, a paid summer research experience, faculty mentoring, workshops, GRE and graduate school application preparation, and travel to present research and explore graduate programs.

Learn more at:

<http://www.mcnairscholars.com>



### McNair Scholars Program

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#### Program Director:

Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood

#### Administrative Assistant:

Mrs. Barb Yeager

#### Graduate Associate:

Amanda Cavin

### *From the Director...*

Spring is an exciting, exhausting, and emotionally turbulent time for McNair Scholars and the McNair Staff who support them. All of our graduating Scholars and some of our alumni are receiving graduate admissions and funding decisions. For many, this academic year has been like a marathon wrestling match that included major decisions about what they will study, when they will study, where they will study, and how they will afford graduate study. Likewise, all five of our returning STEM Scholars have successfully navigated the process of applying for off-campus summer research opportunities. I am honored to have been a part of and I have learned a great deal from our Scholars' brainstorming processes. In fact, I've added a new mantra to our collection. Winthrop Scholars know our top mantras are: "You are always on an interview," "Suck it up," and "Your mentor trumps me." I've added "Gratitude is always appropriate." My advice this semester has been, whenever you need to ask questions of graduate or REU faculty regarding their/your expectations, start the communication with "Thank you" for whatever the recipient has already done for the Scholar.

I want to take a moment to walk the talk and thank doctoral student and McNair Alumna Cecile Gadson for traveling several hours and delivering the keynote address at the SC McNair Scholars' Orientation April 2<sup>nd</sup>. I knew Cecile's story of her road to the PhD would inspire and inform, but I had no idea how much ALL of us needed to hear it. Her frank recount of the ups and downs and lessons learned that yielded successful navigation of program search, admissions decisions, finding funding, then Doctoral study resonated with the audience. Many a student shared with me how much they appreciated Cecile's wisdom and candor. Thank you, Cecile.

### *Reminders from Mrs. Yeager*

When calling the office, be sure to identify yourself before launching into the reason for your call. We appreciate knowing who we're talking to!

# McNair Office News



We have really enjoyed watching McAllister grow @ Our writing coach, Stephanie Bartlett and her husband, David Dixon, welcomed her into the world on August 29, 2015. McAllister weighed 7lbs and 5 oz and was 20” long.



Barb Yeager, McNair Executive Support Specialist began working on a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Nutrition this fall. We are so proud of you, Mrs. Yeager!



# The Power of a Mentor

**“I ENCOURAGE ALL OF YOU TO SEEK OUT  
TEACHERS AND MENTORS THAT CHALLENGE  
YOU TO THINK FOR YOURSELF AND GUIDE YOU  
TO FIND YOUR OWN VOICE.”**

**RENEE OLSTEAD**

© Lifehack Quotes

In the McNair program, the mentor/mentee relationship is crucial. John C. Crosby says, “Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.” Without our mentors, we would be lost. This is what our scholars have to say about our wonderful mentors!

My research mentor, Dr. Grossoehme, has been an awesome teacher and supporter throughout my undergraduate research experience. Dr. Grossoehme has shown me the roller coaster that is biochemistry research. He is supportive when experiments don't work (and sometimes take all summer to troubleshoot and finally get to work), and he is always excited and proud when they do work. Also, he's always able to keep the lab fun. I couldn't imagine working under a better mentor and am thankful for the excellent faculty here at Winthrop! – Oliva Manley

The best thing about Dr. Sleight is that a simple conversation about how I was going to wear my hair for my McNair interview could turn into an award-winning research project with her expertise and guidance. She's da bomb!  
– Malyn Pope

My mentor, Dr. Gardner, has been very generous with her time and wisdom. She embodies what it means to live according to one's own values and inspires me to create a life that "makes my heart sing." She has become such an important person in my life in such a short time, and I am forever grateful for her! – Shannon Snelgrove

Dr. Aaron Hartel was a great mentor. He helped me further develop efficient laboratory skills, such as maintaining an organized lab notebook and proper handling of hazardous chemicals. I was also thought how to properly use and analyze a variety of lab equipment and spectra such as the rotary vaporization apparatus, IR spectroscopy, and H-NMR and C-NMR spectroscopy. Through him being my mentor for my Ronald E. McNair summer research at Winthrop University, I was able to present myself as a more competitive applicant and was accepted into a number of graduate programs. I give Dr. Hartel a grand thank you for his time, patience, and mentorship. – Diamond Melendez

Dr. A. Manetta (retired now) Department of Social Work was more than a mentor, she was an inspiration, friend and "counselor." Her knowledge, expertise and delicate nature on the very difficult subject of suicide and suicide survivors was paramount in my success as a McNair Scholar. I will never forget talking with her the first time about my desire to research this complicated, often depressing subject. She was candid that she did not like the idea of an undergraduate student embarking on such a complex topic, but admired my plight knowing I too was a survivor thereby agreeing to mentor me. She guided me through the research, writing and presentation process with compassion and enthusiasm. She not only taught me; more importantly, she helped me heal. That healing and knowledge allowed me the strength to reach out to other survivors in their healing and that for me is what it all is about. Giving back. I would not be the social worker I am today had it not been for her. - Wendy Adams

I had two mentors this summer, and they were double the trouble! Dr. Heard is an ecologist and Dr. Frost is a microbiologist from the Winthrop Biology Department. Our research focused on creating a microcosm to determine the salinity tolerance of *Eshcerichia coli* in beach sand. They have helped guide and encourage me throughout the research process. From Dr. Heard, I learned how to tell the "story" of our research, interpret data, and look at our research from a larger perspective. From Dr. Frost, I learned how to dig deeper into the microbial world and focus on detailed aspects such as bacterial chemical cleaving and dilutions. They are amazing mentors, and I am so thankful I had the opportunity to work with and learn from them. Not only are they willing to get their hands dirty with our *E. coli* research (figuratively because personal protective equipment is a must in lab!), they are also willing to have fun and play Trivia Crack on our way back from collecting sand samples at Folly Beach. Needless to say, they are pretty exceptional! – Leigha Stahl

Dr. Prus was my McNair mentor, but has continued to be a mentor by helping and encouraging me long after my SRE. He's helped me get into graduate school in Ohio for School Psychology, find my way back to South Carolina for my internship, navigate to find my first "big girl job," and most recently was a confident during the enrollment process for Clemson's Ph.D. in Educational Leadership. Without his wise advice, sense of humor, and constant encouragement I know that I would not be where I am today. His influence, a few good words from him on my behalf, and his subtle guidance have afforded me opportunities I wouldn't have otherwise had the privilege of experiencing. Though he'll always say I don't need to thank him for anything, I can't offer enough "thank yous" to him. Of course, a big thank you also has to be said to Dr. F-W and Barb! Their advice, support, and relaxed conversations have helped me tremendously throughout the last several years. I'm so very grateful to know them and to be apart of the amazing program they've fostered at Winthrop!! – Muri Mata Howle

My mentors have taught me so much! Doing research with Dr. Frost and Dr. Heard has helped me decide my future career path, and they are both great at giving advice on grad school. Dr. Frost has taught me that when something goes wrong the only thing to do is try again. After many ugly PCR gels she just encouraged me to try again. Her enthusiasm and love for her field have inspired me to pursue something related in the future. Dr. Heard always has an interesting book to lend and great advice to give. His outside perspective was helpful during my project and I look forward to continuing to work with him and take his classes. Thank you Dr. Frost and Dr. Heard!  
– Savannah Moritzky

Thank you, Dr. Wojcik, for guiding me throughout my summer research project. You pushed me to go beyond my limits and taught me much more than I expected to learn. You were extremely supportive of what I hoped to accomplish, and were always available to help me in any way. Thank you so much for being such a great mentor, and for showing me that research is something I can and would enjoy pursuing! – Kristin Ramirez

As my advisor and mentor, Dr. Reiland has supported me throughout my entire college career, and I will always be greatly appreciative for her guidance and patience. Dr. Reiland has been extremely helpful in teaching me the structure of scientific writing. She has taught me a lot about the research process in psychology and inspired me to continue conducting research involving cognitive processes. I believe that she encompasses exactly what it means to be an excellent advisor and mentor. – Emily Hokett

Dr. Tripp taught me a lot but my favorite quote is " Don't reinvent the wheel if you don't have to." It reminds me to slow down and take advantage of the work of those who have come before me.  
– Alexandra Foster

Dr. Sumter was an amazing mentor. She was dedicated to the research project and helped me every step of the way. Having Dr. Sumter as a mentor allowed me to get closer to her and learn just how wonderful of a person she is. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to work with her this summer, I could not have asked for a better mentor.  
– Theresa Melendez

This summer, I was especially privileged to have Dr. Jason Hurlbert as my mentor. It is clear that Dr. Hurlbert is distinctly passionate for guiding, challenging, and instilling growth as well as independence in his students. My mentor never made it easy; each day, I was pushed to improve my bench skills, awareness, and level of inquisition. Because of his guidance, I achieved more than I could have anticipated. The demanding experiences from the lab wholly refined my abilities and perspective as an aspiring scientist. I am truly grateful and indebted to have worked under the mentorship of Dr. Hurlbert.

– Jesslyn Park

Dr. Takita Sumter is (still) my mentor and great friend. She is amazing. I wouldn't be the scientist today if it wasn't for her guidance. By the time I left her lab and moved onto grad school, I knew that I was well-established with a wide range of biochemistry knowledge, a wealth of equipment and technological training, and a passion to conduct scientific research. Also, Dr. Sumter has trained me well in putting together some powerpoint slides... I give the BEST presentations now and I still always think back to her saying "tell a story!" Thank you Dr. Sumter for everything!

– Ashton Brock

I honestly could not have asked for a better mentor. Dr. Cagle was there to guide me through every step of the research process. He encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and to belief in myself and my abilities. It was truly an honor to work with such a knowledgeable professor. Thank you, Dr. Cagle, for an excellent summer!

– Jesse Grainger



## February

Cayla Eagon

Destinee Johnson

Holly Rittenberry

Brittany Stapleton-Livingston

Camerun Washington

## March

Naseem Adkinson-Jobe

Charlotte Brown

Cecile Gadson

Emily Hokett

Brittany Johnson

Stanley Kennedy

Autumn Leggins

Kevin Mays

Courtney Gregory Mericle

Jesslyn Park

Malyn Pope

Krysten Sobus

Raven Sumer

Hailey Woods

## April

Brittney Black

Chelsea Gilmore

Everett Johnson

Elizabeth Lambert

Alfred McCloud

Savannah Moritzky

Shayla Warren



## May

Brianna Barnette

Chauntice Buck

Keisha Carden

Aaron Fountain

Olivia Manley

Shanique Sumter

Brandi Teat



# Welcome Incoming Scholars!

First Name	Last Name	Year	Major	Minor/ Concentration	Research Topic
Naseem	Adkinson-Jobe	Junior	Business Administration	Marketing	Potential research topic for this summer: Economic opportunities for Collaborative Consumption
Maddie	Diaz	Soph	Biochemistry	Biology	Biochemistry of Proteins
Elizabeth	Lambert	Junior	Accounting		Corporate fraud
Autumn	Leggins	Soph	Biology	Chemistry	Studying the relationship between RitR, Phpp, and Iron in Streptococcus pneumoniae
Nicole	McMullen	Senior	Biology		FOX 1/FOX 2 knockout gene expression using CRISPR/Cas 9 using Ciona intestinalis as a model
Lesley	Pena	Junior	Psychology and Child and Family	Creative Writing	How locus of control, mindfulness, and religious views effect stress levels
Savannah	Pewett	Senior	Psychology	Criminal Justice	Perceptions of Crime, Neighborhoods, and Police
Holly	Rittenberry	Junior	Athletic Training	Health	The effects of a lower body flexibility plan on reducing stress on the ulnar collateral ligament of collegiate baseball players
Claudia	Salazar	Senior	Psychology	Spanish	Personal experiences with stereotyping
Tollie	Schultz	Junior	Psychology	Women's and Gender Studies, Humanities	The Effects of Gender Expression on Relationship Attachment
Jalen	Smith	Soph	Psychology	Criminal Justice	Recidivism rates with offenders
Shayla	Warren	Junior	Psychology and Sociology	Criminology	Racial microaggressions and how they affect life satisfaction and health
Camerun	Washington	Junior	Biology and Modern Languages		X chromosome non-destruction drosophila

## Points of Pride

### Congratulations to...

- **Brittney Black** on receiving her LPCA (licensed professional counselor associate)!
- Dr. Takita Sumter and **Derion Reid** (and others) for publishing their article *The High Mobility Group A1 (HMGA1) Transcriptome in Cancer & Development!*
- **Holly Rittenberry** and **Alexis Williamson** on becoming Peer Academic Coaches!
- **Emily Hokett** for receiving the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship!
- **Aaron Fountain** on being selected by Indiana University to be featured on their website under *Portraits of IU* and publication of his article *Native Lives Matter Goes Beyond Police Brutality*.
- **Ian Deas** on being featured by Motivating Males on their website.
- **Cecile Gadson** and **Derion Reid** on receiving Honorable Mentions from the Ford Foundation!
- **Emily Hokett, Claudia Salazar, Tollie Schultz**, on earning Psi Chi Regional Research Awards at the Southeastern Psychological Association Meeting.