

Winthrop University  
**MCNAIR SCHOLARS  
PROGRAM**

Newsletter



Spring 2015



Ten Winthrop McNair Scholars graduated on May 9<sup>th</sup>. They are: Leah Brown, Kendra Bufkin, Amanda Cavin, Ian Deas, Brittany Johnson, Diamond Rose Melendez, Justin Moore, Denise Peppers, Shalace Rose, and Sarah Wicks.



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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Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood

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**Graduate Associate:**

Kierra L. James

# Incoming Scholars' Summer Research Topics

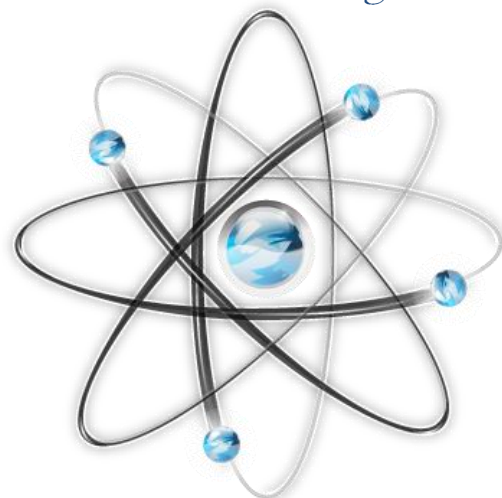
- ❑ Biological evaluation of novel benzisoxazolo[2,3-a] pyridinium and quinolinium tetrafluoroborates as anticancer agents
- ❑ Creating Affordable Learning Structures for Students with Learning Disabilities
- ❑ Are Young Adults Being Desensitized By Media Ads and Propaganda
- ❑ Homeless Adolescents
- ❑ Effects of Beach Nourishment on the Microbial Community of the Beach
- ❑ Using Next Generation Sequencing to Realize Predator-Prey Relationships of meiofauna
- ❑ Infectious Diseases
- ❑ Affirmative Action
- ❑ Modes of Online Art Education Targeted to Underprivileged Youth
- ❑ The Location of E. Coli on Beached and Impact on Human Health
- ❑ How Has the Arab Spring Impacted Syria Since Early 2010?
- ❑ How Do Parents/Guardians Influence Intrinsic Motivation in Children in Poverty?

## INCOMING SCHOLARS' REFLECTIONS ON BEING SELECTED...

**"I was super shocked when I first found out that I had been accepted into the McNair program. As a matter of fact, I think I had a mini freak-out after I got the call from Kierra telling me that I had been accepted into the program. Honestly, at first I could not believe that "I" was chosen for such a prestigious award. Being chosen as a McNair Scholar is a life changing opportunity that I could not be more thankful for." – Jesse Grainger**

**"I was thrilled to be selected for the McNair program. All the opportunities and guidance McNair provides are overwhelming. I am grateful for the chance to grow through this experience."**

*-Shannon Snelgrove*



# WHO'S YOUR DADDY (OR MAMA)?

Match the baby pictures with his or her Scholar or Alum parent on the next page!



# Who's your Daddy? Scholars and Children

Brandi Jeffries : Grace

Dwana David : Ethan

Jordyn Kessler : Harper

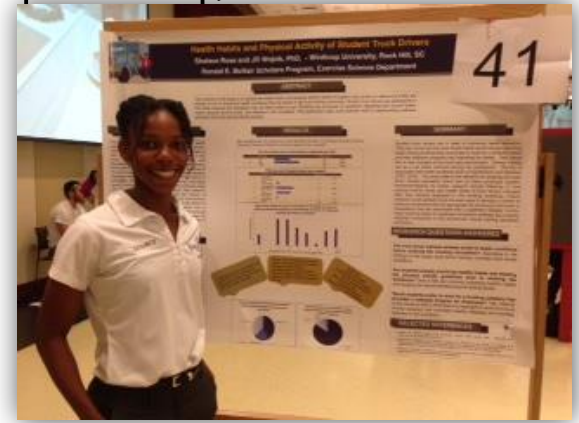
Courtney Mericle : Caysen

Kierra James : Kameryn and Madison

## From the Program Director

My greatest joy as McNair Director is watching our Scholars be recognized for their excellence. This semester has provided lots of joy. Every Scholar we've served this year has earned bragging rights. Here are just a few examples. Leah Brown and Sarah Wicks were selected for the College of Arts & Science's highest honor for student research, the Inez Bell Caskey Scholar Award, in Social Sciences and Science and Mathematics respectively. Ian Deas was awarded the Sunbelt Rentals Scholarship and Alex Foster was just awarded the Kate Wofford Scholarship from the College of Arts and Sciences. [This Scholarship is known as "the Scholar's Scholarship."] Shalace Rose's athletic prowess has earned her recognition at several track meets this spring, including first place for her relay team at the Charlotte Invitational, and the Robert H. Breakfield Award (for leadership, sportsmanship, and academic integrity).

You can see why our office McNair Pride Board has been active this spring. Right now, it includes the list of SOURCE presenters and several graduation announcements. For example, Chauntice Buck shared her photo announcement for her graduation. She has earned her Master's in Counseling at UGA. Congrats Chauntice! Congrats also to Nicole Drown who graduates this week with her MAT program from Winthrop. We'd love to hear of other graduations and fellow ships. Please share your good news with us like Keisha Carden did. Keisha was awarded the McNair Graduate Fellowship at the University of Alabama. We love Scholars' recognition even more when it comes with funding!



Shalace Rose @ SOURCE

Two alumni funding announcements on the Pride Board are bringing national recognition to our Scholars and the Program. Hannah Swan (University of Utah) was awarded an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship to support her computing research. This is the first NSF GRF for an alumnus of our program and earning this fellowship is a BIG deal. Destinee Johnson (Stanford) was awarded the Knowles Teaching Fellowship. As part of this prestigious award, Destinee will join a five-year cohort of STEM teachers. Destinee is the first Winthrop Scholar to earn the Knowles Fellowship and we are so excited about what this opportunity will afford her. I hope we will have many NSF and Knowles announcements in the years ahead.

Thank you Scholars and Alumni for applying the work ethic you showed in your first summer research experience to endeavors like these. The payoff will be 10-fold. And, please keep updating us so we can offer support and share your joy.

-Dr. FW

*For the next newsletter,  
submit your pictures for our  
"Who's Your Doggy?" page.*

## Who's Your Daddy Answer Key

Kameryn Mills-6

Madison Mills-5

Grace Jeffries-1

Ethan David -3

Harper Kessler-2

Caysen Mericle-4

# POINTS OF PRIDE



Scholars discuss some of their recent accomplishments and contributions gained from the program...

## Jessica Fuentes

" I was nominated and in the top three finalists for Spanish Teacher of the Year for the state of South Carolina. The ceremony was in November. ... I am starting my Ed.S program in Administration through Arkansas State University. "

## Taylor Toves

"When I was selected to be in the McNair Scholars Program I was so honored! I could not wait to share the news with my family. It is such a great opportunity that I have been blessed with and I just want to make sure that I do not take this for granted. I plan to take full advantage of everything that this program has to offer."

## Kristin Ramirez

" I've presented my summer research, "The Physical Fitness Components and Posture Screening of Female Competitive Dancers" at the SEACSM (Southeast American College of Sports Medicine) conference in Jacksonville, FL. "

## Cecile Gadson

"I earned a 4.0 during my first semester in my doctoral program at the University of Tennessee."

## Aaron Fountain

"Recently, my McNair research paper titled 'The War in the Schools: San Francisco Bay Area High Schools and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement, 1965-1973,' was accepted for publication by the California History journal. One thing I learned about trying to get published is to never give up. I have been re-editing and submitting the paper for a year and a half (to a total of four journals and seven submissions) and at times I felt that it would never get published. As the editor of the top journal in American history (The Journal of American History) told my class, publishing an article is a process. You should expect to get rejected on the first submission. The paper does not have to be perfect the first time, but it should not be sloppy. Another thing that is important to do is to acknowledge any shortcomings and methods that you cannot or will not do. Many reviewers have critiqued my paper in terms of how they would have written it, and I had to lay out why I was not writing it in that particular way. The last thing I will say is that you must know your argument. A perfectly written article for one journal might not be good for another."

# New to the Winthrop McNair Family

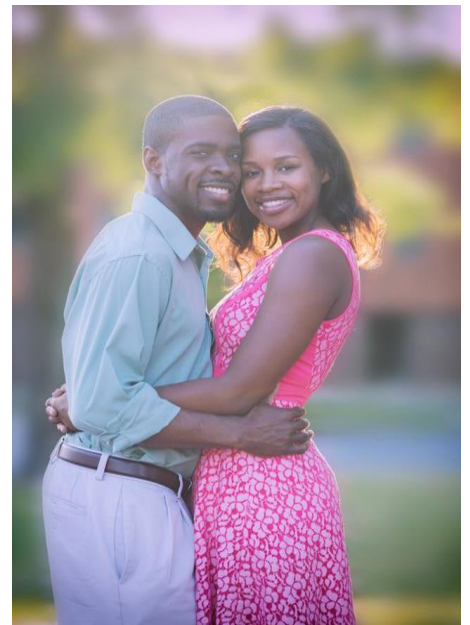
Several Alums have recently added or are expecting to add to their families...



Alum Derion Reid and Heather Williams got engaged on December 22, 2014.



Scholar Nikesha (Nelson) Mynatt and Max Mynatt married on June 14, 2014.



Former GA Shannon Simmons and Ramone Hemphill will be married on September 19, 2015.

## Alumni Spotlight: Everett Johnson



My first encounter with the Ailey organization was at New York City Center watching beautiful dancers perform *Revelations*. Seeing male dancers like Clifton Brown and Guillermo Asca (who is a fellow Queens native and someone I work alongside with now) inspired me to become a dancer. From the balcony seats, I journeyed onward as a student, then guest choreographer, and then as Assistant to the Co-Director of the Ailey School. This has always been my dream company and to experience it in so many capacities is something I am proud of. My ultimate goal is to be a member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Company and inspire other boys and young men to pursue dance. Although I am new to this position, I am not new to this organization and that has made the transition back to New York City and my first full time job easier. I still get to dance and choreograph, with opportunities already presenting themselves, and I have a one bedroom apartment! The excitement for this path I am trailblazing cannot be tamed and I look forward to sharing more of it with you.

# Celebrating the Legacy of Ronald E. McNair

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“As a new McNair Scholar in 2012, I had the privilege to watch the program’s infamous video about the life of Ronald E. McNair. I never forgot his struggle and his “McNair Moment.” The McNair Scholars program has truly changed my life since that day I watched the biography, and it is all because of Dr. McNair. He is a great inspiration to every scholar.”- Kierra James (GA)

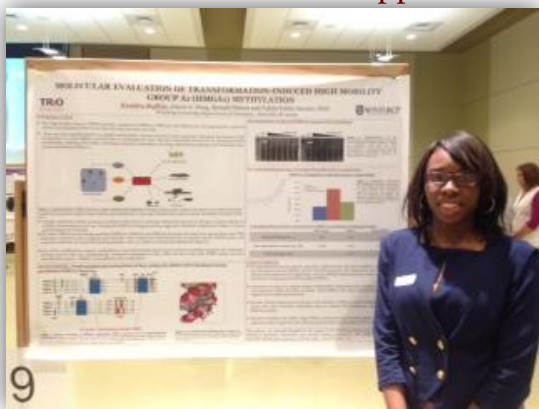


On January 28, 1986, Ron McNair died during the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger in Cape Canaveral, FL. It is through his legacy that McNair Scholars across the U.S. receive the opportunity to complete summer research and attend graduate schools around the world.



## SCHOLARS PRESENTING RESEARCH

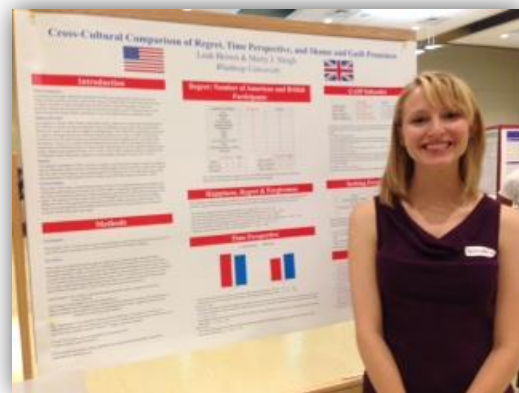
- ✓ Scholar **Kendra Bufkin** presented her work titled, "Molecular Evaluation of Transformation-Induced Methylation of the High Mobility Group A1 (HMGA1) Chromatin Binding Proteins" at the Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) in Boston, MA. Kendra also presented at SOURCE (4/25/15).
- ✓ Scholar **Kristin Ramirez** presented her work with another dance major titled, "Comparing Ethnocentric Bias: 20th Century and Today" at the Big South Undergraduate Research Symposium and Winthrop SOURCE conferences.
- ✓ Scholar **Leah Brown** presented two posters at The Southeastern Psychological Association Conference (SEPA) in Hilton Head this Spring. One of these posters is part of the CEPO/Psi Chi undergraduate poster session during the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), and it is titled "British and American Young Adults' Cross-Cultural Stereotypes of Regret and Shame." The other poster is not part of the undergraduate poster session, and is titled, "Cross-Cultural Comparison of Regret, Time Perspective, and Shame and Guilt Proneness." Leah presented 4 posters at SOURCE.
- ✓ Other SOURCE presenters are: **Alex Foster, Lauren Green, Brittany Johnson, Diamond Rose Melendez, Denise Peppers, Shalace Rose, and Sarah Wicks.**



Kendra Bufkin presented  
@ SOURCE

SOURCE is Winthrop's  
Showcase of  
Undergraduate Research  
and Creative Endeavors

Leah Brown @ SOURCE



## FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM OUR GA

*I really enjoyed my time as the McNair GA. The McNair program staff was influential in helping me attend graduate school, so I appreciated being involved with making this possible for other students. However, I have decided to take a break from graduate school after the birth of my new baby girl, Madison. This means that I will be ending my time as the McNair GA in addition to my graduate program. Madison was born about a month early, and I believe that both my girls, Madison and Kameryn, deserve to be my main focus for awhile. I would like to thank the McNair staff for all the help and encouragement throughout this time and I would like to say goodbye to those of you I contacted and got to know personally during my time as GA. — Kierra James*

*Kierra, I am grateful for your contributions to the program as a Scholar and as a staff member. It made me sad to see you go and it helps that you keep in touch. Even more, I feel fortunate to get to watch your daughters grow and to see your pride in their development. Kamryn and Madison are both very special to me as is their mother. —Dr. FW*

*P.S. And remember, we're always here to support you when the time is right for you to return to your graduate studies 😊*

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY SCHOLARS!

## FEBRUARY

Cayla Eagon  
Destinee Johnson  
Brittany Stapleton-Livingston

## MARCH

Charlotte Brown  
Krysten Sobus  
Hailey Whitehurst-Woods  
Kevin Mays  
Stanley Kennedy  
Emily Hokett  
Courtney Gregory-Mericle  
Cecile Gadson  
Malyn Pope  
Jesslyn Park  
Brittany Johnson  
Raven Suber



## APRIL

Brittney Black  
Savannah Moritzsky  
Chelsea Gilmore  
Everett Johnson  
Alfred McCloud

## MAY

Shanique Sumter  
Keisha Carden  
Brandi Teat  
Brianna Barnette  
Aaron Fountain  
Chauntice Buck  
Olivia Manley  
  
Stephanie Bartlett  
Barb Yeager

# Thank You

**Courtney Mungo & Kierra James**  
**for your work on this newsletter.**

## Contact Info

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# May 2015 Graduation Memories



Graduation Lunch Photos

Dr. Fortner-Wood loves it when Scholars send her photos. Thanks Denise!



Justin is ready for Georgetown



Brittany Johnson, Dr. Stephanie Milling (Mentor), and Alumnus Everett Johnson



Almost all of our May Graduates