

Winthrop University
**MCNAIR SCHOLARS
PROGRAM**

Newsletter



Spring 2014

Congratulations McNair Graduates



During the 2013-2014 academic year, the McNair Family celebrated the end of 17 undergraduate careers as well as 7 graduating McNair Alumni. The graduates were rewarded with royal blue McNair Honor cords and a special gift.

CONGRATULATIONS, MCNAIR SCHOLARS!

The McNair Family is very proud of you all and we are honored to be a part of this special moment in your lives.

December 2013

Dwana Davis
Kierra James

May 2014

Brianna Barnette
Charlotte Brown †
Symone Calhoun
Keisha Carden *
Dedra Darby †
Nicole Drown *
Aaron Fountain
Cecile Gadson †
Chelsea Gilmore
Chelsea Johnson
Destinee Johnson*

Brittany Lawrence
Johnakin Martin
Amy Moore †
Nikesha Nelson
Jose Paramo
Brittany Prioleau
Derion Reid
Daniel Selvey †
Krysten Sullens †
Hannah Swan

* Honors Program Scholars

† Alumni Scholars



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 Assistant:

LaToya P. Hicks

What's Next for our Graduating Scholars?

Brianna Barnette

B.S. Elementary Education

After graduation, I will be teaching 3rd Grade.

Charlotte Brown*

M.B.A.

After graduating, I plan to open a local juice bar in July called "Fresh Vibes" which will showcase local artists as well as sell amazing cold-pressed juices.

Symone Calhoun

B.A. Psychology

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Master's in Clinical Psychology at the University of Central Florida.

Keisha Carden

B.A. Psychology

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Master's in Clinical Psychology at the University of Alabama.

Dedra Darby*

M.S.W.

After graduation, I plan to be a hospice social worker working with individuals to ensure they have optimal quality of life at the end of life.

Dwana David

B.A. Psychology

After graduation, I will be enrolling in the S.S.P. School Psychology Program at Winthrop University.

Nicole Drown

B.A. English Literature & Language/History

After graduation, I plan to enroll in an MAT Program.

Aaron Fountain

B.A. History

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Ph.D. in History at Indiana University-Bloomington.

Cecile Gadson*

M.A. Counseling Psychology

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Chelsea Gilmore

B.A. Psychology

After graduation, I will be working in HR Management at Winthrop University. After that, I plan to pursue a degree in I/O Psychology.

Kierra James

B.A. Psychology

After graduation, I will be pursuing my S.S.P. in School Psychology at Winthrop University.

Chelsea Johnson

B.A. Business Administration – CIS

After graduation, I will be working for Integration Point in Charlotte, NC.

Destinee Johnson

B.S. Biochemistry

After graduation, I will be enrolling in the one-year, full-time Teacher Education Program at Stanford University pursuing my M.A. in Secondary Chemistry Teaching Credential.

Brittany Lawrence

B.S. Biology

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Master's degree in Public Health at the University of Georgia – Athens.

Johnakin Martin

B.S. Mathematics

After graduation, I will be enrolling in the MAT Program at Winthrop University.

Amy Moore*

M.A. Teaching

After graduation, I plan on seeking a position teaching high school chemistry for 4-5 years before beginning a Ph.D. program.

Nikeshia Nelson

B.A. Dance Education (K-12)

After graduation, I will be getting married in June! Over the summer, I plan on staying in Atlanta to work with a dance company. After that, I will be moving to Tennessee and hope to find a dance job in Nashville.

Jose Paramo

B.S. Political Science

After graduation, I will be pursuing my Master's in Political Science at Virginia Tech.

Brittany Prioleau

B.S. Biology

After graduation, I plan to further my research and prepare to pursue graduate study.

What's Next for our Graduating Scholars? (cont'd)

Derion Reid

B.S. Chemistry

After graduation, I will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Chemistry at Northeastern University in Boston.

Hannah Swan

B.S. Mathematics

After graduation, I will be pursuing a Ph.D. in Computing with a track in graphics and visualization at the University of Utah.

Krysten Sullens*

S.S.P. School Psychology

After graduation, I will be moving to Fayetteville to be with my husband and pursuing a career in the surrounding school district or Fort Bragg, the Fayetteville Army base.

Points of Pride

- **Keisha Carden** earned the PSI CHI Regional Research Award for her research with Dr. Sleigh. Keisha was also the recipient of the Psychology Department's Outstanding Student Award. This award is given annually to a student who excels in all areas - research, service, engagement, and scholarship.
- **Symone Calhoun** was a CEPO Research Award Finalist for her project with Dr. Nelson.
- **Chelsea Gilmore** was a CEPO Research Award Finalist for her project with Dr. Nelson.
- McNair Alum, **Dedra Darby**, was named the 2013 Intern of the Year!! She was honored at the Winthrop Student Life Awards Ceremony which took place on April 17, 2014.
- McNair Alum, **Cecile Gadson**, received the 2014 President's Diversity Award at Towson University! After being nominated by the faculty in her program, she also received the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.
- McNair Alum, **Charlotte Brown**, was the recipient of the CALG (Charlotte Area Liaison Group) Professional Scholarship Award of \$1,000 for her work in HR with Duke Energy as an intern.
- McNair Alum, **Cayla Eagon**, was the editorial assistant for Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe & His Contemporaries, which is an online peer-reviewed journal in eighteenth-century British literature studies.
- 2104 Summer Research Scholar, **Ian Deas**, was elected President of the Winthrop University Council of Student Leaders (CSL) for the 2014-15 school year.
- **Destinee Johnson** was selected to represent the Winthrop Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi in the national award competition. She will have the opportunity to compete for one of fifty-one \$5,000 fellowships and six \$15,000 fellowships to support graduate study. Destinee was also a recipient of the 2014 Outstanding Leadership Award presented by the Carolina-Piedmont Section of the American Chemical Society. In addition, Destinee was named the 2014 Leader of the Year for the Winthrop Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society. She will represent Winthrop University in the National Leader of the Year Award Scholarship Competition that will be awarded at the 2014 ODK Leadership Conference this summer. She will also have the opportunity to compete for one of four \$1,000 scholarships and one \$4,000 scholarship.
- **Aaron Fountain** presented his research titled, "Boycotts and Shutdowns: Black Student Activism, Racial Violence, and Reconciliation in San Francisco Bay Area Public Schools, 1966-1970," at The Place of Education in African American History and Culture 8th Annual Conference of the Triangle African American History Colloquium at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill February 28-March 1, 2014. Aaron was also awarded the Ross A. Webb award for best paper written in a history class on a U.S. topic on April 22, 2014. The prize came with a \$100 cash reward.
- **Dwana David** attended the Carolinas Psychology Conference at Meredith College in Raleigh, NC on April 12, 2014 to present her study "Facebook: A New Diary?" She was also accepted into all 5 of the graduate programs that she applied to.
- In August 2014, **Leah Brown** will have the opportunity to present two of her research projects at the American Psychological Association's annual convention in Washington D.C. Leah states that presenting her research at a nationally renowned psychological conference would not have been possible without the McNair Scholar's program.
- **Brianna Barnette, Stanley Kennedy, Brittany Lawrence, and Brittany Prioleau** presented research at NCUR 2014 (National Conference of Undergraduate Research) this semester which was held in Lexington, Kentucky.
- **Brianna Barnette** was also nominated for and became a *Winthrop Woman of Excellence* this year for her volunteerism and work with children.

2014 South Carolina McNair Orientation



On Saturday, April 12, 2014, McNair Scholars from the University of South Carolina (USC) traveled to Winthrop University for the annual South Carolina McNair Orientation. Sixteen guests from USC joined thirteen Winthrop Summer Research Scholars. Seven of our graduating Scholars graciously agreed to present their research in a lightning presentation and to share their wisdom on one of our panels. Our panels included Winthrop and USC Scholars and one alum. We also had three mentors who shared their advice about preparing for summer research.

Welcome 2014 Summer Research Scholars

Ian Deas

Biology

Mentor: Julian Smith, Ph.D.

Alexandera Foster

Sociology

Mentor: Brad Tripp, Ph.D.

Lauren Green

Biology

Mentor: Matthew Stern, Ph.D.

Emily Hokett

Psychology, Spanish

Mentor: Sarah Reiland, Ph.D.

Brittany Johnson

Dance Education

Mentor: Stephanie Milling, Ph.D.

Jordyn Kessler

Biology

Mentor: Janice Chism, Ph.D.

Olivia Manley

Chemistry

Mentor: Nick Grossoehme, Ph.D.

Diamond Melendez

Biology

Mentor: Aaron Hartel, Ph.D.

Kristin Ramirez

Biology, Dance

Mentor: Janet Wojcik, Ph.D.

Shalace Rose

Exercise Science

Mentor: Janet Wojcik, Ph.D.

Leah Brown

Psychology

Mentor: Merry Sleight, Ph.D.

Kendra Bufkin

Chemistry

REU at Notre Dame*

Justin Moore

Business Administration

Mentors: Clarence Coleman, Ph.D. & Harold Manasa, M.A. Economics

Denise Peppers

Chemistry

Mentor: Nick Grossoehme, Ph.D.

Sarah Wicks

Chemistry

Mentor: Robin Lammi, Ph.D.

Sweets for Scholars



On February 18, 2014, the McNair Office hosted “Sweets for Scholars ” to celebrate our amazing Scholars. Our current Scholars were not the only ones who received treats. Care packages were also sent out to our McNair Alumni, many of whom showed their appreciation via our official Facebook page. Among the sweets were chocolate chip cookies, key lime cupcakes, and Mrs. Yeager’s famous Pumpkin Rolls.

McNair 2014 Taco Thursday



On Thursday, April 3, 2014, the McNair Staff hosted Taco Thursday. Scholars, mentors and fans of the Winthrop McNair Scholars Program were treated to a taco bar, fresh fruit, and homemade baked goods prepared by the program director, Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood, and the Executive Support Specialist, Mrs. Barb Yeager. Scholars were able to take a break from studying to fellowship with other Scholars and enjoy the food. Much thanks to Dr. Fortner-Wood and Mrs. Yeager for providing lunch and a much needed break!

Scholar Spotlight: Jose Paramo



On Friday, March 14, 2014, McNair Scholar, Jose Paramo, presented his research project entitled "Political Reactions to Bitcoin" at the 2014 Ivy Plus Symposium hosted by Harvard University and MIT. The Ivy Plus Symposium is targeted to students who are or have participated in programs such as the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program. Participants have the opportunity to interact with faculty, hear about cutting-edge research from the world's leading institutions of higher education, and to present their own work and get feedback from faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars.

Jose Paramo before his poster symposium, pictured with his Mentor, Dr. Steve Smith, and Program Director, Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood.



Alumni Spotlight: Ronald Nelson



Winthrop McNair Alum, Ronald Nelson.

McNair Scholar Alum, Ronald Nelson, was awarded a \$25,000 Research Training Grant. The purpose of the grant is to support graduate students with research projects in the area of Molecular Signaling. Applications for funding were reviewed on the basis of student progress, consistency with the scientific focus of the CMCS (Center of Molecular Communication and Signaling) on intra and inter-cellular signaling, and potential for collaborative interdisciplinary research with other CMCS associated researchers.

Upon his acceptance at Wake Forest University, he was awarded a Teaching Assistantship which provided him with a stipend of \$21,500 per year. Winning this grant has awarded him a total of \$25,000 (for his current stipend & supplies) and a chance to not teach and instead focus more of his energy on his remaining graduate level classes and on his research. Overall, Ron states that he is "extremely excited to be able to not teach and instead work diligently on my research project. Obtaining more data will allow me to write more grants and attend more research conferences."

From the Program Director

At right, Dr. F-W gets pies in the face for Relay for Life this Spring.



I am incredibly proud of our Scholars, graduates, and alumni. Fifteen Scholars presented at professional meetings this year. Seventeen Scholars earned Baccalaureate Degrees. Four alumni earned graduate degrees at Winthrop this May. By the end of summer, when our program turns five years old, at least 16 alumni will have earned a Master's or Specialist degree. Twenty-two alumni will continue their pursuit of a post-baccalaureate degree and half of these are currently pursuing doctoral degrees. This fall, 13 recent graduates and one alumnus will begin their graduate school journey at Indiana, Northeastern, Stanford, Georgia, Central Florida, Utah, Alabama, Winthrop, and Michigan.

You have each worked so hard and deserve all these opportunities have to offer you. It is no wonder I get choked up as I think of what you have and will accomplish. Watching each of you graduate and move on to your next chapter is bittersweet as I burst with pride and begin to miss seeing you. Please take pity on your Director every once in a while and email, text, or call her. It helps with the missing to hear from you. Mrs. Yeager can tell you that there is often a high-pitched squeal of delight that follows a contact from an alum.

This spring was particularly emotional because we had our largest graduating class. Thankfully, we began our summer research program two days after graduation. This allowed me to jump right into serving ten new McNair Scholars. Already, I can see they possess the commitment, tenacity, and good humor to be successful researchers and graduate students. I am looking forward to supporting them as their research unfolds over the coming weeks and they prepare to present at the State McNair Symposium at USC on June 23rd.

I hope you can tell it is my honor and joy to work with each Scholar and Mentor. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

- Cheryl Fortner-Wood, Ph.D.

Upcoming Events

Winthrop McNair Summer Research Experience (SRE)

Monday, May 12, 2014 – Thursday, July 3, 2014

2014 SC TRiO McNair Research Symposium

Monday, June 23, 2014

University of South Carolina

2014 SAEOPP McNair/SSS Scholars Research Conference

Thursday, June 26, 2014 – Sunday, June 29, 2014
Atlanta, Georgia

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SCHOLARS!!!

FEBRUARY

Ian Deas
Destinee Johnson

MARCH

Stanley Kennedy
Emily Hokett
Brittany Johnson

APRIL

Chelsea Gilmore



JUNE

Kristin Ramirez
Brittany Prioleau
Hannah Swan
Symone Calhoun
Lauren Green
Jordyn Kessler
Kendra Bufkin

MAY

Keisha Carden
Brianna Barnette
Aaron Fountain
Olivia Manley

Photo Album



◀ McNair Scholars Dwana David & Kierra James at the December 2013 Commencement Ceremony.

Program Director, Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood with graduating Scholar, Nikeshia Nelson. ➤





Graduating McNair Scholar Alums Dedra Darby & Amy Moore earned their Master's degrees this May.



McNair Scholars and Alumni at the 2014 Graduation Celebration Luncheon.



Dr. Nick Grossoehme smiles for the camera at the 2014 Graduation Luncheon.



Graduating McNair Scholars, Destinee Johnson & Brittany Lawrence.



Graduating Scholars Derion Reid pictured with his mother and Destinee Johnson with Rachael Law, Director of the Science Diversity Program.



Graduating McNair Alum, Charlotte Brown and guest.



Graduating Scholars Symone Calhoun and Keisha Carden with guests.



Graduating Scholars Brianna Barnette and Johnakin Martin at the 2014 Graduation Celebration Luncheon.



Graduating Scholar Jose Paramo pictured with his wife, Maria, and daughter, Lucia.



Graduating Scholars pose with McNair Program Staff and Mentors.



Program Director, Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood and McNair Graduate Assistant, LaToya Hicks, prepare care packages for our McNair Alums.



Program Director, Dr. Fortner-Wood enjoys sending gifts to the Scholars.



McNair Scholar, Jose Paramo, along with McNair mentors and supporters, enjoy the annual Taco Thursday event.



Executive Support Specialist, Mrs. Barb Yeager posed with 2014 McNair Research Scholar, Brittany Johnson at “Sweets for Scholars.” ➤

◀ 2014 McNair Research Scholar, Emily Hokett enjoys “Sweets for Scholars” in the McNair office.





Scholars Derion Reid, Brittany Lawrence, Stanley Kennedy, and Keisha Carden with Program Director, Dr. Fortner-Wood at "Sweets for Scholars."



McNair Alum John Huffman and his wife Laura stop by the office for a visit on their way back from visiting John's graduate program at the University of Michigan.