Messages from McNair
McNair Scholars Program
University of North Dakota

Before you can make a dream come true, you must first have one.
Ronald E. McNair

Focus On McNair Alumni
McNair November Graduate Panel

The topic of the November McNair meeting, held on November 8th, was “Transitions into Graduate School” with a panel of five McNair alumni graduate students. They discussed how to better prepare for graduate school, the benefits of having been a McNair Scholar and having conducted undergraduate research, what they wish they had known, important of having a life outside of academia, and other aspects of the transition process. The panelists were very open to questions from the current McNair Scholars and a wide ranging discussion was held.

Will refer to the panelist photos from the left: Liz Luger, Pat Jordheim, Matt McCleary, Rae Piwarski, and BJ Rainbow.

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Elizabeth Luger graduated in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. Liz took a post-baccalaureate research position and then worked at the UND Center for Rural Health before entering the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program the Fall 2012 semester. She is involved in the INPSYDE Program and also has an assistantship.

Pat Jordheim graduated in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. Pat received her Masters degree from Communications in August 2009. She is ABD (all but dissertation) in Teaching and Learning. Pat has received both teaching and research assistantships. The departments she has taught in include: Communications, Woman’s Studies, and Teaching and Learning. She plans on having her Ph.D. by Spring 2015.

Matthew McCleary graduated in 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. Matt is in his second year of his Masters program in the UND History Department and has a teaching assistantship. He is expanding upon his interest in the history of Special Education in his thesis and is on the North Dakota Special Education IDEA Advisory Board. Matt plans on pursuing his Ph.D. after obtaining his Masters.

Rachel (Rae) Piwarski graduated in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. Rae is currently a first year graduate student in the UND English Department. Rae has a teaching assistantship and is enjoying graduate school very much. Once she receives her Masters, she plans on continuing with her Ph.D. out of state.

Robert (BJ) Rainbow graduated in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Studies. BJ first entered the UND Sociology Graduate Program, and is currently in the UND Educational Leadership Graduate Program. This semester, he is interning at the Student Involvement Center and next semester, will have an assistantship at American Indian Student Services. BJ is involved in teaching cultural enrichment with a wide variety of community and youth organizations. These include: singing, dancing, and other cultural activities.

More Alumni Updates

Dale Brunelle is an alumni of three UND TRIO Programs: Upward Bound in the early 90s; worked and attended college at Minot; decided to attend college full time and re-entered UND Student Support Services in the fall of 2007; and was accepted into the McNair Program in the fall of 2008. He received Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 2009. Currently, Dale is has his M.S. in Biology and is working on his Ph.D. with Dr. William Sheridan at the University of North Dakota.

McNair alumni, Amber Annis was visiting her former McNair faculty mentor, Birgit Hans, during her Thanksgiving break from the University of Minnesota where she is a graduate student in the American Studies Ph.D. Program. In 2010, Amber graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in History and Indian Studies; then in 2012 with a M.A. in History (both from UND). Also pictured in the middle, is her sister, Heather. Heather is a current McNair Scholar in Social Work and Indian Studies.
Newest McNair Ph.D.

Kyle Hill graduated from the University of North Dakota with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology in May 2007. He was accepted into the UND Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program and started his graduate work Fall 2007. He is currently working as a Postdoctoral Research Associate at University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy in Duluth, MN. In the photo, Kyle is demonstrating his feelings after successfully defending his dissertation in November 2013. He will officially have his Ph.D. this December. Big Congratulations to Kyle!!!

In Honor of James Crayne

On November 26th, TRIO staff attended a memorial tree planting for James Crayne. Jim was a veteran and a McNair alumni who graduated in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science degree in General Studies. He was accepted into the UND Geography Graduate Program and was a graduate student when he passed away on February 18, 2008. TRIO Programs would like to thank Dr. Doug Munski for spearheading the effort to have this tree planted in Jame’s memory. A plaque ceremony will take place at a later date.
Additional Alumni News

Matt Fahrenbruch received his Masters at The University of Southern Mississippi. His Thesis was: "Waves of change: tourism and vulnerability in San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua". This is an offshoot of his undergraduate McNair research topic. The picture is from 2010 when he was working in Moab, but it is a nice picture if you want to use it.

Currently employed as a Geospatial Technician I at CACI Incorporated in Ft. Collins Colorado. (God willing) I will be starting a Doctoral Program in Geography at the University of Kansas in Lawrence beginning in January 2014. I have been granted a research assistantship with Drs. Peter Herlihy and Jerry Dobson on their project "Central America Indigena. The project is a sponsored by the American Geographical Society and the Foreign Military Studies Office and seeks study sources of resilience in indigenous populations in Central America.

One Student’s Journey

Education is one way to be on the cutting edge in order to be successful, and achieving success may not be so difficult; after all, we are Americans and live in the land of opportunities. My Name is Shafiq Khan, a McNair Scholar. Since the 2008 recession, huge numbers of American families have fallen into financial difficulties. I was in the middle of that, and realized I wanted a new career. So, I decided to turn to school for higher education. Over the past three years, I have been studying business management and geography.

After a long separation from higher education, I have returned and intend to complete a PhD; therefore, I am dedicated and committed to academic programs. My plan is to enroll in the Instructional Design and Technology Graduate Program. After a successful completion, I will start the Ph. D. program. Since the Instructional Design and Technology is a comparatively new field, it is dedicated to applying what is empirically understood about how humans learn and improve upon performance with design, development, implementation, and evaluation of learning and performance support products, processes, and environments. As an IDT professional, my goal is to learn and master the field of designing curriculum and integrating it with innovative technology.

My interest in particular is to research the foundations of the education system of the third world; in particular, I would be interested in studying the education system of Bangladesh. There are two types of education that are available for the people, one is western education mostly adopted from the British Educational System, second is the traditional Islamic education which is called the Madrassa system. My research would emphasize the Madrassa system and make possible connections to the contemporary education system. As a result, people would have better understanding of that education policy and procedure, and the new curriculums and technology will give a better edge. A successful completion of the research would help to determine how the educated community in the western world can extend their hands to benefit millions of people who have fallen behind the modern education system; as a result, crimes and terrorism will go down and the communities would be a better place to live. However, it is not an easy task - it will require research in learning behavior which includes, human psychology and cultural studies. At the end, creation of a new curriculum and appropriate technology will make a huge difference in their current educational system.
The McNair Program has been a vital support system while I continue my education. The program is helping me to develop my knowledge through seminars and workshops related to graduate education. It allows me to establish a working relationship with professors. The McNair Program exceeded my expectations and raised my awareness of future education in a Ph.D. program, and support that allowed me to embrace my research interests.

In addition to my accounting and bookkeeping experiences, I also successfully owned and operated a small enterprise located in southern California which helped me developed strong management, marketing, and administrative skills. I am highly customer-centric with excellent relationship building skills as evidenced by achievement in building 6-figure annual sales. I utilized my strong management, marketing, and administrative skills to build new business, and to cultivate existing customer relationships. I have been self-confident, organized, and motivated to bring creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit to all business endeavors. I am a people person with ability to organize and communicate. I was able to increase the annual revenue by 20%, and managed payroll of more than 100 employees.

I have been enjoying the educational environment rather than the industrial settings and corporations; therefore, I would like a career in the academy, such as a professor, research associate, or as a consultant in educational institutions. I am also interested in working in the field of community development; for example, working closely with educational curriculum development and implementation through technology; for instance, internet, video, audio, and print methods to benefit disadvantaged communities. My focus would be on educating women and children for their better future. Finally, it is the passion for impacting the world that has led me to take the next step.

We want to share all the great things our alumni are doing!! If you have any information to share, please email it to us (patrice.giese@und.edu or jill.teters@und.edu) and we will include it in our next newsletter.

Welcome New Scholars

Hello, my name is Tara Boland. I am a junior at UND studying Physics with a minor in Mathematics. I specifically like material science and condensed matter physics. I grew up in Enderlin, North Dakota. After graduating high school in 2011, I came to UND to study Forensic Science. After one semester, I decided that it was not the major for me. I love mathematics and wanted to be in a major that relied on mathematics. After taking physics classes, I decided physics was the major for me. I have always been fascinated with nanotechnology and because of that material science. I want to go to graduate school to do research in Condensed Matter Physics or AMO to work with nanotechnology. I want to go for a PhD in physics after I obtain my Undergraduate degree in Physics. I am honored to be a new member of the McNair Program. The opportunities this program provides will help prepare for graduate school and the best chance for me to have a successful future in Physics.

My name is Kelly Kennedy; I was born and raised in Grand Forks, and after living in California for a few years, returned here to go to school. I am currently a senior at UND pursuing an English Major. I intend to obtain a Masters and PhD in the field of English with the hopes of becoming a professor. I’m very excited to begin working with the McNair Program and my mentor Dr. Michelle Sauer on research in medieval literature. In my spare time, I enjoy playing with my two Great Danes, Caoimhe & Kaska.
Words for Wits

Improve your GRE vocabulary by matching the following words and definitions:

1) Largesse  a. To call; name (now chiefly in the past participle as ycleped or yclept.
2) Pokelogan  b. Proudly.
3) Clepe  c. To run away hurriedly; flee.
4) Adscititious  d. 1) Full of difficulties. 2) having a rough surface. 3) indecent or scandalous.
5) Skedaddle  e. Northeastern U.S. marshy or stagnant water that has branched off from a stream or lake.
6) Scrabrous  f. 1) In headlong and disorderly haste. 2) in a haphazard manner.
7) Helter-skelter  g. Generous bestowal of gifts.
8) Skeigh  h. Added or derived from an external source; additional.

Answers: 1.g; 2.e; 3.a; 4.h; 5.c; 6.d; 7.f; 8.b.