CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING MCNAIR SENIORS!!

Jemmel Billingslea, Psychology
Jemmel's qualitative study, “Education of Black Males: Voices of Black Males”, investigated the perceptions of college age black males relevant to college aspirations and enrollment in higher education. His mentor is Dr. Stephanie Bramlett. Jemmel has been accepted into a Master of Education program at Boston College and was awarded a Teaching Fellowship at the Nativity Preparatory School. He plans to begin his graduate studies in the Fall.

Erica Brasley, Neuroscience
Erica’s research is titled “Relationship Between Cell Responses in the Rat Medial Prefrontal Cortex and Central Thalamus During a Spatial Memory Task”. Her mentor is Dr. Robert Mair. Erica is currently preparing for the MCAT and is planning to apply to joint MD/PhD programs in June. She plans to begin her graduate studies as of Fall 2015.

Maria Carrasquillo, Political Science
Maria’s research is titled “Moving South Instead of North: Understanding How Immigration has Changed in Central American and How it Will Impact Costa Rica”. Her mentor is Dr. Mary Malone. Maria was accepted at American University for a MA in International Affairs: Comparative and Regional Studies for the fall. She plans on doing her Masters while continuing to participate in State Department Embassy Internships and will be taking the Foreign Service exam this June to begin the Foreign Service Officer hiring process.

Komot Gabriel, Business
Komot’s research is titled, “Sudan & Botswana – Corruption and Economic Development: Lessons for South Sudan”. His mentor is Dr. Bruce Elmslie. Komot is also part of the 2013 summer cohort of Heinz College’s Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) program at Carnegie Mellon. He was also awarded the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship to study abroad in Budapest Hungary this past year. Komot recently accepted a full-time position as a Sales Representative with E&J Gallo Winery. He plans to begin his graduate study in Public Policy in the upcoming year.

Nyomi Guzman, Communication and Women’s Studies
Nyomi’s research project, “Interracial couples in Romance Films: fact or fantasy”, involves the analysis of the social and relational difficulties and communication strategies used by black/white interracial couples, as they are depicted in romance films produced from 1992 to 2012. Her mentor is Dr. James Farrell. Nyomi is currently applying to graduate programs in Media studies at The New School, Suffolk University and Ball State in Indiana.

Manuel Lopez, Psychology
Manny’s research is titled, "Observing Couples' Interactions in Conflict Situations: Predictors and Consequences of Conflict Resolution Behaviors". His mentor is Dr. Edward Lemay. Manny has accepted a full-time position at Liberty Mutual as a Disability Claims Representative. He is planning to apply to graduate programs in Psychology this summer.

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." Mahatma Gandhi
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David Morejon, Microbiology
David’s research is titled “The Availability of Beneficial Mutations to an Organism Evolving in an Environment to Which It Has Previously Adapted”. His mentor is Dr. Vaughn Cooper. David is currently working in his mentor’s research lab. The position will become full-time as of Fall 2014. David plans to apply to UNH-Durham MS in Genetics in the Fall.

Michael Sanchez, Economics and Philosophy
Michael’s research is titled, “Impact of Microfinance on Clients of MFIs as Perceived by Latin American Participants in the Programs of ACCION USA in Boston”. His mentor is Dr. Michael Swack. Following graduation, Michael plans to gain work experience in his field while researching and applying to graduate school programs.

Lachey Ross, Justice Studies/Sociology
Lachey’s research is titled, “Gun Control Laws and the Crime Rate: Impact of Gun Control Policies on the Crime Rate”. His mentor is Dr. Charles Putnam. Lachey has applied to graduate Sociology programs with a concentration in Criminology at Northern Illinois University and Northeastern University. This past year, Lachey interned with the US Marshall Service in DC. His long term career objectives are to work at any of the following: Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the DEA, or US Marshall Service.

Ann Steeves, Health Management and Policy
Ann’s research is titled, “Evaluation of the Impact of 4-H Essential Elements: Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity”. Her mentor is Dr. Robert McGrath. This summer, Ann will be working on Stone Wall Farm. Ann is also planning to participate in a year-long fellowship with the Real Food Challenge campaign and is planning to pursue an MPH at UNH. Upon completion, she plans to pursue a PhD. She is very interested in the intersection of the food system and the health care system and plans to dedicate her life to these studies.

Elizabeth Wible, Psychology
Liz’s research is titled, “Incidence of Unwanted Sexual Experiences Among College Students: Gender and The Red Zone”. Her mentors are Dr. Ellen Cohn and Dr. Victoria Banyard. Liz applied for graduate school in New York, Boston and Los Angeles. She will be attending Suffolk University in Boston, and was granted a $12,000 a year fellowship to pursue a Masters in Integrated Marketing Communication!

Timothy Vorachak, Philosophy
Tim’s research is titled, “Stereotypes: A Philosophical Investigation”. His mentor is Dr. Willem DeVries. Tim is planning to apply to graduate programs in Philosophy including the University of Texas, San Antonio. He plans to begin his graduate studies as of Fall 2015.

WELCOME NEW UNH MCNAIR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, ERIN VARSALONE!!

Erin joined the McNair Scholars Program (TRIO) team as the Assistant Director in 2014. She is a native New Englander and was the first in her family to have earned an undergraduate degree. Erin earned a B.A. in Psychology from Rhode Island College and an M.A. in Art Therapy from New York University, Steinhardt School of Education, Culture, and Human Development.

Previously the Project Director of the Sophomore Year Initiative, a Title V Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) grant-funded program at Lehman College, City University of New York, Erin has dedicated her career to serving and supporting the academic and career success of students who are considered to be underrepresented in higher education. Prior to Lehman, Erin served as a Senior Academic Advisor at Parsons the New School for Design in New York City, where she specialized in programmatic assessment and evaluation. She also has a background in clinical research and has assisted numerous NIH-funded studies involving developmentally at-risk youth. In her free time, Erin enjoys spending time with her husband and their French bulldog, Stella. She enjoys everything “art”, long distance running, and the great outdoors.
Every year the University of New Hampshire presents the Erskine Mason award to “that senior who is distinguished for most consistent progress and achievement.” Only one senior per year is bestowed this honor, out of the entire undergraduate student body. The UNH McNair program has had four winners since the award’s inception in 2001. These winners include Heidi Tobin (2001), Leolene Jean (2007), and the two McNair Scholars who have won the award the last two years in a row; George Adams (2012) and Eric Sales (2013).

George Adams, as a 2012 Erskine Mason Award winner and a McNair Scholar, has been able to pursue his passion through a fully funded doctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago for Music History/Music Theory. The University of Chicago Music Department is known the nation over as a truly pioneering group of faculty and students in the new frontiers they uncover through research and practice. Adams, alongside UChicago faculty, is researching American concert music, particularly post-WWII. Adams is building off of the research he did as a McNair Scholar on composer Steve Reich. “My broad historical project at the moment is to provide some tentative definitions for the oft-used terms ‘modern(ism) and post-modern(ism),’ by interpreting composers’ rhetoric and public images carefully in addition to hermeneutic approaches to their music.” George gave us a clearer idea of just what McNair meant to him as an aspiring academic. “…McNair [gives you] the opportunity to begin relationships with other students and with faculty. Within these mentor relationships you are able to engage with people ‘in a sort of pre-professional environment’ and that this ‘training’ environment is crucial for success at the graduate level.”

Eric Sales, the most recent McNair Scholar to win the award, was concerned with the public’s understanding of the environment. His research centered on “The Effect of Regional Climate Trends on Public Opinion of Climate Change,” with his mentor Dr. Lawrence Hamilton of the UNH Sociology Department. Sales takes a very active approach to his learning, whether he is on the slopes somewhere in the Andes or at the library doing intriguing research. Like Adams, Sales is also pursuing a PhD. He is a fully-funded graduate student at the University of Utah.

“Whether or not you reach your goals in life depends entirely on how well you prepare for them and how badly you want them. You’re eagles! Stretch your wings and fly to the sky.”
-Ronald McNair
THANK YOU Dr. Paul Tsang!

The UNH McNair Scholars Program would like to recognize Paul Tsang, a strong advocate of McNair students and the program. Paul Tsang, professor of Molecular, Cellular and Biomedical Sciences, and Director of the Hamel Center for Undergraduate Research, has been instrumental to the success of both the UNH McNair Scholars Program and the scholars themselves. He has consistently volunteered his time educating McNair Scholars on conducting research, assisting them with finding a faculty mentor, and serving as mentor himself to many students.

The UNH McNair Scholars Program would sincerely like to thank you for all you do, Professor Tsang!

CURRENT SCHOLARS SPEAK ABOUT THE MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM

"The McNair program has given me the opportunities I've needed to succeed in my undergraduate career. This is the best all-around program anyone could strive to be a part of if they wish to continue in a career in academia. The program has prepared me to attend graduate school through the opportunity to participate in numerous workshops and conferences, as well as giving me the chance to develop research and grow as a scholar."

~ Shersingh Davila-Tumber, Environmental Conservation

"McNair has been great in allowing me to gain experience as a researcher. Not only had I been provided with the means with which I could perform my research, but I am also now connected with McNair's vast network of contacts."

~ Allen Ma, Mechanical Engineering
Since the UNH McNair Scholars Program began in 1991, it has served over 305 students. Of those 104 alumni have gone on to receive master’s degrees and 27 have earned PhD degrees. 17 alumni have gone on to earn other professional doctorates and 17 alumni are currently pursuing PhD degrees.

There are currently 36 UNH McNair scholars enrolled in the program and 17 Pre-McNair students are currently on their way to become McNair scholars next year!

UNH McNair Alums: We want to hear from YOU! Please let us know where you are in the world and the last degree you completed. Contact us at mcnair.program@unh.edu or (603) 862-0088

UPCOMING EVENTS

MCNAIR CURRENT STATS

Schedule of Events

- April 8, Research Seminar, 12:40-2, MUB 338
- April 11-26, UNH Undergraduate Research Conference
- May 1, McNair Summer Fellowship forms due
- May 6, McNair Senior Celebration, 5:30-8, Alumni Center
- June 1, McNair Summer Session Begins
- June 26, SAEOPP Conference, Atlanta, Georgia
- July 21, Summer Session Exit Interviews, Mendum’s Pond Event
- July 25, Summer Session Ends

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