I was sitting at my desk and I received a call that there is a student who wants to talk to me. I was in the middle of a session, so I asked the office assistant to take a message. Two seconds later, the call is transferred to me and it's Marsha from McNair. I am always delighted to hear from McNair people so it didn’t bother me at all that my wishes were ignored. Marsha and I talked about the upcoming newsletter and the alumni spotlight. She asked me to write a piece and I was delighted to do so, because the McNair Program has been such an influence on the person I am today.

I am a graduate student at Florida International University in Miami pursuing a Master's of Science degree in Higher Education Administration. This program prepares students to work in a vast array of positions at colleges and universities. The program consists of 39 course credit hours as well as an internship and thesis option. As far as funding, students in this program have assistantships which allow them to work as paraprofessionals in various campus departments. Assistantships are a graduate student’s DREAM because they pay your tuition as well as provide a stipend.

Assistantships are a contract between you and the university. They allow you to gain experience in the area you hope to work in when completing your program. My assistantship in the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services at FIU allows me to develop programs and workshops that cater to international and transfer students at the university. This position also allows me to serve as a liaison for the LGBT community on campus providing safe zones and activities. I also work part-time as an academic advisor at Miami Dade Community College advising incoming freshman on possible majors and course selection.

Without a doubt, the McNair Program definitely helped prepare me for graduate school. There really isn't a way to sugar coat what McNair has done for me. Prior to the program, I was just like any other inner-city student who made it to college. A bachelor’s degree is more than I could have wished for. The McNair Program exposed me to the possibility of graduate school. Through McNair, I was able to learn to conduct research, to write a proposal and what the expectations of graduate programs and graduate level courses. The program also provided me with a GRE preparation course.

In addition, the program allowed me to visit graduate schools, travel to research conferences and the opportunity to present my research at a UNH McNair Research Symposium and national conference. All these opportunities were at no cost to me.

All of these experiences helped to prepare me for life as a graduate student, but more importantly life after graduate school. This program helped to teach me the true value of education and how easily it can be taken for granted. Today, I understand what my education means to me and what role I play in my education.

For many reasons, I am deeply indebted to the McNair Program. I believe that programs such as this one saves so many students whose dreams are clouded by socio-economic and racial barriers. I will always remember my experiences as a McNair scholar because I was given a chance!
McNair Scholars at the 2007 Senior Retreat in Durham, NH.

From the Desk of Kuhio to McNair Seniors
Greetings, Friends and Scholars:

It’s a busy life, being a McNair senior. Still finishing your undergraduate education, you search out programs to fit your academic needs and hopes. Then, filled with all the anxieties and hopes of a life in graduate school, you blow through a flurry of paperwork, requesting letters of recommendation, filling out applications, mailing them out, waiting nervously to hear back. It feels good to be done with.

But there is a 500-pound gorilla in the room which only grows as graduate school approaches: financing your education. Unless a program has promised you an assistantship or a fellowship, you will need to be resourceful in finding money. If you take the time to search, there are good sources of funding to be found. The University of Idaho, for example, has announced five competitive programs of financial support, with one program designed specially for McNair scholars.

If you want to determine if any of the schools you’ve applied to have similar kinds of financial support, search for your school at: www.rochester.edu/college/McNair-Program/applicationincentives.html.

(Con’t on page 3)
Name: Grant Andrew Dillon  
Major: Mechanical Engineering  
Research Interest: Technology  
“Research, to me, is an independent and unique look into the new and important areas.”

Name: Sarah A. Gromady  
Majors: International Affairs and Political Science  
Minor: Russian  
Research Interests: Racial, religious, social and gender oppression  
“I hope to understand current policies that oppress and undermine the efforts of people to achieve their aims and how this oppression may be alleviated.”

Name: Stephen Philip Morgan  
Major: Civil Engineering  
Research Interests: The affects of biological organisms in water and wastewater treatment plants  
“I am very interested in the design and processes of treatment facilities since they are directly related to public health, and I feel that if I can make a significant change in public health I can leave an impact on the community and possibly save lives.”

Name: Uyen-Mai Doan  
Major: Biochemistry  
Research Interests: Pharmaceutical Research: Plants and Natural Remedies  
“If I can do research in the field, I might be able to find a way to make pills out of the natural remedies, and hopefully help sick people.”

Name: Adam Eleazar Hernandez  
Major: Athletic Training  
Research Interest: Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL)  
“The research I have done has taught me much about myself. It has taught me to be patient, diligent, and has tried my time management skills. This research has really opened up my eyes to the possibilities that research holds”

Name: Jennifer Ashley Neal  
Major: Social Work  
Research Interests: Prisons and Reformation  
“I believe that prisons should focus on reformation more than punishment.”

From the Desk of Kuhio to McNair Seniors (con’t from page 2)

Also take a look through this list of fellowships, grants, scholarships and other financial opportunities sponsored by the federal government: www.studentjobs.gov/e-scholar.asp

The key word here is “resourceful”. You can do more than take student loans (though that may be one slice of the pie). Search through the many grants and scholarship opportunities available to scholars of your caliber, and you just may discover somebody willing to pay you to be in graduate school. If you are interested in discussing your options, set a meeting with me and we’ll do the necessary research in the McNair office. The sooner, the better.

In the meantime, keep up the good work. I look forward to talking with all of you when acceptance letters start rolling in.
Mark your Calendar– Spring 2008

February

• Saturday, February 9th: McNair Colloquium in the MUB from 1:00-5:30 pm

March

• Thursday–Sunday March 13th-16th: National McNair Conference in College Park, Maryland
• Saturday, March 15th: Research Proposals Due in McNair Office
• Monday—Friday, March 17th-21st: UNH SPRING BREAK
• Saturday, March 29th: Cultural Event (The Boston, MA Aquarium and Dining at a Haitian restaurant)

April

• Thursday– April 10th: Social Event: TBA

May

• Friday, May 2nd: Summer Fellowship Applications Due in McNair Office
• Tuesday, May 13th– Senior Celebration (5:00 pm-7:00 pm at the New England Center)
• Thursday, May 15th: Documentation of all Research Requirements and Copies of all Graduate School Offers Due in the McNair Office
• Friday, May 30th: Copy of 2nd Semester Transcripts Due in the McNair Office