CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING MCNAIR SENIORS!

Danelis Alejo

Danelis’ research, titled “Immigrants’ Perspectives on Their Experiences Serving As Language Brokers for Their Families,” was in the Education Department here at UNH and mentored by Dr. Judy Sharkey. Danelis has been accepted and will attend Syracuse University for her PhD in sociology, with a full research fellowship and graduate assistantship.

Sinor Ali

Sinor completed two research projects, titled, “The Presence or Absence of Coli-form/E-coli in the Waters of Accra, Ghana and the Surrounding Cities,” and “Safe and Clean Water through Intermittent Slow Sand Filtration using BioSand Filters”, for which his mentor on both projects, was Dr. M. Robin Collins, UNH Department of Civil Engineering Department. Sinor plans on going home to Iraq for a year before beginning his graduate study in environmental engineering in the area of water treatment.

Phil Lewis

Phil’s research was “Predicting Winter Tick Abundance on Moose in New Hampshire,” he worked with Dr. Peter Pekins, UNH Department of Natural Resources & the Environment. Phil accepted a year-long paid internship with Durham Evangelical Church, in which he will be working with middle school and high school youth, as well as college students.

Chaquanzha Stephenson

Chaquanzha’s research, “How Does Sentencing Policy or Law Affect Persons of Different Race, Ethnicity, and Gender?” was mentored by Dr. Charles Putnam, UNH Justice Works. Chaquanzha has accepted an alternate director position at Nathaniel Ely Summer Camp in Norwalk CT. She will be taking the LSAT in October and apply to law and Ph.D. programs.

Hong Sun Park

Hong Sun’s research, titled “Types of Help Among Mexican Immigrant Mothers and Their Children,” looked at ways mothers’ assisted children with specific tasks. His mentor was Dr. Pablo Chavajay of the UNH Psychology Department. Hong was accepted with funding and will be attend Boston College’s Social Work Program this fall. He will pursue his PhD following the Master’s degree.

Eric Sales

Eric’s research title is “The Effect of Regional Climate Trends on Public Opinion of Climate Change,” his mentor is Dr. Lawrence Hamilton, of the Sociology Department here at UNH. Eric has accepted a full research fellowship for his PhD with the University of Utah where he will study Environmental Sociology. In addition, Eric has been awarded the 2013 Erskine Mason Award at UNH.

Lana Ciali

Lana’s research is “A Qualitative Study of Stimulant Medication Use and Misuse Among College Students: Exploring Motives For Misuse,” her mentor is Dr. Barbara White from the Department of Occupational Therapy. Lana will be attending UNH for her Master’s degree, this fall, in Occupational Therapy. She will be working as a graduate assistant this fall for Professor Barbara White.

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UNH MCNAIR SCHOLARS WALK AGAINST VIOLENCE

On April 11, UNH McNair Scholars students participated in the SHARPP (Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program) 3rd Annual Taking A Community Stance: Stepping Out to Speak Out Against Violence Rally held at UNH, in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This localized social movement was aimed at gathering students, faculty, staff and Durham community members together to take a collective and powerful stance against all forms of violence on the UNH campus, including violence against women. Violence against victims/survivors results from the use of force or threat to achieve and maintain control over others in relationships, and from societal abuse of power and domination in the forms of sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism, able-bodyism, ageism and other oppressions. The overwhelming support for the event was inspiring, and the UNH McNair Scholars Program was proud to be a part of this event.
Matthew Richards graduated from UNH in 2012 with his Bachelor’s in Kinesiology with emphasis in Sport Studies at UNH. He was a McNair Scholar, his research project was entitled “Perceptions of Youth Sport Coaches on the Impact of the CoachSmart New Hampshire (CSNH) Coaching Education Program on Coaching Efficacy.” Matt is now a graduate student, pursuing his Master’s degree in Exercise Science with emphasis in Sport Performance at Ball State University in Indiana. This summer, he will be the new strength and conditioning intern for the Indiana Pacers NBA team.

Did you always know you wanted to go to graduate school?

I was pretty intent on not going to graduate school as a freshman. I wanted to do my four years and leave UNH. The McNair program changed my outlook on what graduate school could offer me.

In what ways did the McNair Scholar’s Program prepare you for graduate school?

The McNair program prepared me for graduate school by challenging me in every aspect of the process behind academic research and offering a GRE prep course in the summer. I was able to build my skills and confidence in my public speaking and presentation in front of audiences.

What was the biggest challenge you encountered when conducting your McNair research?

The biggest challenge was in writing my research article to the approval of the review board. My first draft was terrible – so I had to work that much more with my faculty mentor and lose that much more sleep to complete it in excellent quality.

What advice would you give to new McNair Program students?

You need to take the initiative to make time in your schedule to see your faculty mentor often, and ask them every little question you have. It will guarantee you success in this program. Be ready to make your McNair work a priority above all your other classes – this means time management is key. Also, be willing to sacrifice. You should be prepared to do all of these things.

Did you find McNair helped you with networking?

Yes. They got me in touch with a UNH McNair Scholar alum whom I had no prior relationship with. That alum attended the same graduate program I am in now, and recommended I check it out and get in touch with the graduate coordinator.

How did the faculty mentoring you received with the UNH McNair program prepare you for your graduate program?

I knew absolutely nothing about everything McNair was asking of me, so you could say that my relationship with my faculty mentor was a close one. It helped me immensely in not only meeting the requirements of McNair, but also in working to produce quality work as if I was in graduate school. There is no way that I would have completed the program without the guidance and motivation from my mentor.
It's hard to explain my 2 year experience of backpacking across Latin America in a paragraph, but there are life changing moments that really stand out. I started backpacking because I wanted to expand my knowledge of the world. I have always been a more visual, than auditory, learner and realized, for me, actually being there and experiencing, hands on, was the best way to I was going to learn. I knew being alone, not having much money, not knowing anyone, not having a place and not speaking the language would put me out of my comfort zone, thus forcing me to change to become a more open-minded, worldly person. At first I was interested in all the beautiful landscapes and nature of Latin America but as I started traveling, the landscapes became less significant as I got to know the locals. After all, if you are traveling alone and not sharing experiences, the value is minimal. As I put myself “out there”, I began meeting locals and seeing the beauty of the simplicity, generosity, and pureness of these people. I befriended the homeless, the indigenous, children, elders, gangs, prostitutes, and whoever else I came across throughout Latin America. I immediately became captivated by their life experiences, having never encountered people like them before. I found everyone had a unique story. Before starting my trip, I had been exposed to the crime rates and was constantly told that I would be at risk of being robbed. I have to admit that, if anyone would be easy to rob it would be me because I am naïve by nature. Although verbal language seemed to put up a wall between me and the strangers, that wall soon broke down after laughing due to the fact that we could not understand each other. I soon figured out that it wasn’t necessarily verbal communication that brought people together, but simply being interested enough to get to know others, and taking the time to build a friendship.

“I soon figured out that it wasn’t necessarily verbal communication that brought people together, but simply being interested enough to get to know others, and taking the time to build a friendship.”

after laughing due to the fact that we could not understand each other. I soon figured out that it wasn’t necessarily verbal communication that brought people together, but simply being interested enough to get to know others, and taking the time to build a friendship. These “strangers” are the reason that I made it through nearly a dozen countries across the continent. My journey continued through the Shuar indigenous regions of the Amazon forest, across the Mayan communities, and all the way to the Quechan people in Peru. I came to realize we live in world full of good people. This was almost exactly the opposite of what I was used to in American society, where the news is filled with horrific crimes, and violence. That is not to say that all my experiences were positive. I did get robbed! The robbery was publicized through media, but what many people don’t know is what followed the event. When I was robbed and left with nothing, I was saved by a couple that owned a small shop. This couple then decided to give me a hand by offering food, money, and comfort. Little did I know this same couple would spend the next full year taking care of me as if I was one of their own children. I would say that of every 100 people I came across, 98 of them had good intentions. Where are the stories of the kind and generous people? Where are the stories of people who make the world a better place by living good and simple lives? Where are the stories of people who willingly take in a stranger who has come upon hard times in a strange land? These are the stories I seek in the world, and feel we all need to go out and find our own stories for ourselves.
Since the UNH McNair Scholars Program began in 1991, it has served over 298 students. Of those, 99 alumni have gone on to receive Masters degree’s, 23 have earned PhD, and 13 alumni have earned other Professional degrees. Currently, there are 32 UNH McNair scholars enrolled in the program and 16 Pre-McNair students on their way to becoming McNair scholars!

**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

**MCNAIR CURRENT STATS**

Since the UNH McNair Scholars Program began in 1991, it has served over **298** students. Of those,

- **99** alumni have gone on to receive Masters degree’s
- **23** have earned PhD
- **13** alumni have earned other Professional degrees

Currently, there are **32** UNH McNair scholars enrolled in the program and **16** Pre-McNair students on their way to becoming McNair scholars!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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**Schedule of Events**

- 5/7: Senior Celebrations (UNH Alumni Center, 5:30 pm)
- 5/18: Commencement~ 2013!
- 6/2: Welcome 2013 Summer McNair Cohort!
- 7/24: Final Summer Research Luncheon
- 7/26: Mendum’s Pond Event for Summer Cohort
- 7/27: McNair Summer Session Ends

**TAMMY J. GEWEHR, Acting Director**

**HELEN LONEK, Program Assistant**

**JENNIFER LOGSDON, Peer Advisor**

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**McNair Scholar Lana Ciali, presenting her research on stimulant medication use and misuse among college students, at one of the McNair Research Luncheons.**

The hurdle that I faced doing this project was definitely time management. This was the first time where I was given such a long period of time to complete a task. Because this is the type of work where you as an individual divide up the research project week by week, it is so easy to push it back when you are so busy with other schoolwork. It is not so structured, therefore you have to be responsible for your own priorities and stay alert for the deadline.

—Quote from a McNair Scholar taken from an end of research evaluation—