

Fall 2009

## McNair Messenger- Fall 2009

McNair Staff

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## An Extraordinary Cohort

The success of the McNair Program is measured in large part by the percentage of participants who begin graduate study in the fall immediately after attainment of the baccalaureate degree. Our seventh cohort of Scholars has been the highest achieving in this measure - 83% of the Scholars started their graduate studies this fall. Of these, 100% received funding and 50% began a Ph.D. program.

These ten Scholars (**Keith Atterberry, Imani Beard, Emilio Caban, Brett Coleman, Andrea Cottrell, Jeremy Dolan, Maria-Lourdes Gomez, Nereida Salas, Gale White and Cornelius Williams**) also excelled in their research projects and presentations. More accomplishments of this talented group: Andrea Cottrell and Gale White participated in study abroad and Lourdes Gomez collected her research data in Mexico. Gale White and Nereida Salas served as Minority Interns, Jeremy Dolan achieved a perfect score on the GRE, and Andrea Cottrell was honored with a student award during the NEIU Black History month Awards Ceremony.

## NACCS Conference

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, McNair Scholar **Imani Beard, Fernando Gonzales,** and **Tracy Navarro** attended the Conference of the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The Scholars presented the panel *Grad School Dreams and Challenges: McNair Scholars from an Urban Metropolitan University*. Their conference attendance was supported by a Hispanic Serving Institution grant earned by the NEIU McNair Scholars Program in collaboration with Latino and Latino American Studies (LLAS).

**Dr. Victor Ortiz**, Assistant Professor and LLAS Coordinator, and Academic Skills Specialist **Angela Vidal-Rodriguez**, accompanied the Scholars. The trip included a tour of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and cultural trips around New Jersey and New York.

Scholar **Juan Ibarra**, who also attended, commented about the trip "I enjoyed the conference very much. I hope I can attend next year, and present my own research."



From right to left Dr. Sanborn & recent grads Nereida Salas, Imani Beard, Gale White, Maria Chavez, Jeremy Dolan, Lourdes Gomez, & Brett Coleman.

## WAEOPP Retreat

McNair Scholars **Angela Howard, Juan Ibarra, Romanetha Looper, Marcus Moore, Jorge Ortiz, Michael Santos, Crispian Van Aelst and Ramon Viera** with McNair Staff members **Carl Mackey and Alejandra Prieto-Mendoza**, attended the WAEOPP McNair Retreat at the Abbey Resort in September. At this retreat, the Wisconsin Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel (WAEOPP) provided the Scholars guidance in applying to graduate school.

The featured presenter was Donald Asher, a recognized authority on the graduate admissions process. Asher, author of *Graduate Admissions Essays*, presented techniques to improve personal statements and applications. He exposed several graduate school myths regarding GPA's and GRE scores. He also provided tips for having more effective letters of recommendation. The interactive sessions motivated and encouraged the scholars.

This retreat was also a great opportunity for the scholars to get to know new staff members and as **Jorge Ortiz** pointed out, "it was an unforgettable time"



Cohorts 7 & 8 Scholars with staff member Alejandra Prieto-Mendoza at WAEOPP

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## Annual Dinner

Scholars, family, friends, and faculty gathered for the 6th Annual NEIU McNair Dinner on May 7. **Dr. Kim Sanborn**, Program Director, welcomed the students and gave the program report and **Dr. Janet Fredericks**, Dean of the Graduate College and Director of International Programs, greeted the Scholars and guests.

**Dr. Olivia Perlow**, Assistant Professor of Sociology provided Mentor's comments, and Scholar **Elizabeth Rodriguez** read a selection from "What is the What." Dr. Sanborn presented pins to new Scholars and **Brett Coleman** offered them advice. **Keith Atterberry, Imani Beard, Emilio Caban, Tracy Navarro and Nereida Salas** gave their reflections on the program. **Dr. Sanborn** presented graduating Scholars with stoles and closing remarks were offered by **Angela Vidal-Rodriguez**.

## Traveling Scholars

Last spring and summer Scholars pursued academic opportunities nationally and internationally. **Jose Fulgencio** went to Princeton University as part of the Junior Summer Institute Public Policy and International Affairs Fellowship.

Jose defines his experience as a once in a lifetime opportunity and he also discovered that “the policy field is more than research and writing, you have to really sharpen your math because in the end great policy will have great statistics behind it. I made friends with both peers and Princeton graduate students.”



*Gale White, her classmates and professors in Guanajuato, Mexico.*

**Jeremy Dolan** traveled to Bulgaria and **Gale White** went to Guanajuato with eleven other students in the company of NEIU professors **Dr. Jade Stanley** and **Dr. Martin Geisso**, from the Social work and Anthropology departments respectively.

Gale describes her trip as a fascinating experience that allowed her to know several academic and historic places of Guanajuato as well as organizations such as the Las Libres Center, which offers legal and psychological support to females victims of domestic violence.

## Recent MA Recipients

**Te'Aira Malone** completed her MA degree in Counseling at Northeastern Illinois University. She is currently working at Metropolitan Family Services, an organization that serves mentally challenged, pregnant teens.

**Kemyta Terry** completed her MA in Political Science at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

**Carolina Campos** Completed her Masters of Arts in Teaching from National Louis University in Chicago, Illinois.

## On the Ph.D. Track

### Melissa Anderson

Melissa is working towards her Ph.D. in Biology at the University of Virginia.

### Keith Atterberry

Keith started his Ph.D in Criminology, Law and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He was awarded the Diversifying High Education Faculty in Illinois (DFI) Fellowship which covers tuition, fees and stipend.

### Maria Chavez

Maria started her Ph.D. in Philosophy, Interpretation, and Culture at State University of New York at Binghamton. Maria has been awarded the Clark Fellowship which included tuition and stipend for 5 years.

### Brett Coleman

Brett started his Ph.D. in Community & Prevention Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Brett has been awarded with a research assistantship

### Andrea Cottrell

Andrea started her Ph.D. in Political Sciences at Purdue University in Indiana

### Jeremy Dolan

Jeremy began his Ph.D. program in Philosophy at New York University this fall. He was awarded the McCracken Fellowship.

### Loren Henderson

Loren is currently working on research papers and preparing for her preliminary exams. She received her MA in Sociology from UIC last fall and is working towards her Ph.D.

### Carl Mackey

Carl started his Ph.D. studies this fall at Loyola University Chicago in Sociology. Carl was awarded a full tuition scholarship from the Graduate College.

### Michael Magee

Michael started his Ph.D. in International Relations at Florida International University.

### Eileen Rollerson

Eileen is completing her Ph.D. coursework at Loyola University Chicago in Sociology. She will soon begin to work on her dissertation.

### Nereida Salas

Nereida is working on her Ph.D. in Political Sciences at the University of Chicago UIC. She was awarded the Lincoln Memorial Fellowship.

### Lina Sweiss

Lina is in her third year of Ph.D. coursework in Human Development, Learning and Culture at the University of British Columbia.

## Graduate School Visits

As part of the McNair Summer Research experience, Scholars visited graduate programs at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, DePaul University, Loyola University Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

On Friday June 12<sup>th</sup> Scholars visited the Milwaukee campus of the University of Wisconsin. The visit was hosted by UWM McNair Director **Nic Ewoldt** who provided an overview of the university's graduate programs and information on funding for McNair Scholars. Ewoldt's presentation was followed by Scholars' individual meetings with faculty representatives of various academic disciplines. Before leaving campus, Scholars and staff toured the university library, home of the American Geographical Society Library.

The University of Illinois at Chicago hosted NEIU McNair Day on June 26. Graduate College staff members Assistant Dean **Dr. Jose Perales**, Recruitment Coordinator **Francisco Pina**, and Summer Research Opportunity Coordinator **Allen Bryson** presented information regarding application to UIC programs. NEIU McNair alumnus **Keith Atterberry** (Ph.D. student at UIC's Criminal Justice Department) and two of his graduate student peers provided a panel discussion.

The Scholars visited Loyola University's Graduate School Monday July 21. They were greeted by **Marcela Gallegos**, the Graduate School's Events and Outreach Coordinator. Scholars met with faculty of the academic departments in which they are interested, and then were joined by Graduate Dean **Dr. Samuel Attoh**, Associate Dean **Dr. Patricia Mooney-Melvin** and Assistant Dean **Dr. Jessica Horowitz** for an informal lunch and discussion. McNair Program Director **Dr. Kim Sanborn**, who has been an adjunct faculty member in Loyola's Fine Arts Department for over 20 years, gave a brief tour of the Lake Shore campus to wrap up the visit.

The last graduate school visit of the year was to DePaul University's Lincoln Park Campus on September 11. The visit began with a campus tour, followed by a panel presentation that featured **Dr. Roberta Garner** of the Sociology Department and **Mr. Brandon Washington** of the School of Education. The presentation was followed by lunch and a question and answer session.

## Summer Research

Twelve Scholars conducted research projects during the McNair Summer 2009 Research Program at NEIU. Scholars worked with faculty mentors to develop an original piece of piece of research and were supported by a \$2800 stipend. Below is a list of the Scholars' research.

### Norman Davis

**Title:** *Perpetuation of African American Racial Stereotypes in the Recording Industry*

**Mentor:** Lance Williams, Ph.D.

### Jose Fulgencio

**Title:** *Plan Colombia*

**Mentor:** David Leaman, Ph.D.

### Angela Howard

**Title:** *Gender Priming and Leadership Emergence in Teams: A "Dead End" in the Labyrinth of Women's Leadership*

**Mentor:** Amanda Dykema-Engblade, Ph.D.

### Juan Ibarra

**Title:** *Latino High School Students' Transition to College*

**Mentor:** Michael Armato, Ph.D.

### Romanetha Looper

**Title:** *Single Sex Instruction for the Inner City Youth.*

**Mentor:** Chandra Gill, Ph.D.

### Delilah McDonald

**Title:** *Preparation for Teaching Reading and Writing in Inner City Communities*

**Mentor:** Kim Sanborn, Ph.D.

### Marcus Moore

**Title:** *Factors that Contribute to the Success of Black Men*

**Mentor:** Chandra Gill, Ph.D.

### Jorge Ortiz

**Title:** *Urban Youth Activism*

**Mentor:** Brett Stockdill, Ph.D.

### Michael Santos

**Title:** *Legal History of Corporations*

**Mentor:** Mark Schmeller, Ph.D.

### Toni Scott

**Title:** *Latinos in Higher Education*

**Mentor:** Christina Gomez, Ph.D.

### Crispien Van Aelst

**Title:** *Social and Personal Perspectives of Racial Integration and Desegregation within the Military Family of the United States*

**Mentor:** Patrick Miller, Ph.D.

### Ramon Viera

**Title:** *Social Justice Issues of Globalization*

**Mentor:** T.Y. Okosun, Ph.D.

## McNair Research Community

Over the past year McNair staff and students conducted a research project that examined the intellectual development of NEIU McNair graduates. The project was funded as a research community by a grant from the Office of Academic Affairs and Provost **Dr. Lawrence Frank**. Researchers **Dr. Jade Stanley** (McNair Mentor and Chair, Social Work), **Dr. Kim Sanborn** (McNair Program Director), **Angela Vidal Rodriguez** (McNair Skills Specialist), **Stacy Brill** (NEIU McNair Scholar and NEIU graduate student, Communications) **Diane Madison** (NEIU McNair Scholar and NEIU graduate student, Communications) **Tamil Selvi Chakrapani** (NEIU McNair graduate assistant and graduate student, Educational Leadership) and **Iliana Gonzalez** (De Paul McNair graduate and NEIU graduate student, Educational Leadership) collected and analyzed qualitative data from 26 NEIU McNair graduates.

Preliminary results were presented by student members of the research community last spring at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual NEIU student Research and Creative Activities Symposium. After continued analysis, more complete results will be presented at the Midwest Association for Educational Opportunity Annual Conference in St. Charles, Illinois by Kim Sanborn and Angela Vidal Rodriguez and at the VIII Annual World Wide Forum on Education and Culture in Rome, Italy by Kim Sanborn and Jade Stanley. In addition, the research was accepted for virtual presentation by Kim Sanborn and Jade Stanley at the International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation in Madrid, Spain.

Dr. Stanley said of the research community, "My involvement in the McNair research community has been a rewarding one. The student, staff, faculty collaborative experience created an opportunity for us to work together on a subject important to all of us. I was impressed with the students as researchers and presenters; they were well prepared, dedicated and enthusiastic about the learning process. The project helped us glean a deeper understanding of the contributions of the McNair Program in preparing students for graduate study. What we found is that McNair provides structure to organize students' educational goals and aspirations as well as a place to dream new dreams for themselves and their community. This project re-ignited a spark in my own work on adult and lifelong learning."

## New McNair Staff

**Alejandra Prieto-Mendoza** is the new Academic Skills Specialist. Alejandra holds a BA in Modern Languages and Translation from her home country Colombia and received an MA from NEIU in Linguistics and ESL last year.



Alejandra started her work in higher education as a graduate assistant in the office of Admissions Counseling and Recruitment here at NEIU and realized she wanted to continue working in higher education, "I like to show the students options and opportunities to go to school and pursue academic goals."

She encourages the Scholars in achieving their dreams and she believes that "...the McNair Program is a great place to work because it is full of students who are working hard to be an example for many others in academia. I feel privileged to be in a position where I can help them walk their path to success."

**Carl Mackey** is the GRE's specialist and Office Support Specialist. Carl is a McNair Scholar (Cohort 1), NEIU alum, and Ph.D. student (*see page*



2). Carl supports the overall operations of the program and leads the GRE preparation efforts for the Scholars. Carl is dedicated and passionate about higher education and he understands the supportive role that TRIO programs play in the success of underrepresented students. Aside from being a McNair Scholar, Carl was also an Honors Scholar at NEIU. One very interesting fact about Carl is that he was the first McNair Scholar to deliver the NEIU commencement address.

**Cornelius Williams** is another addition to the staff as he is serving as a graduate assistant in the McNair office. Cornelius is working towards his MA in Geography & Environmental Studies here in Northeastern Illinois University

## TRIO NEWS

The Obama Administration has requested \$848,089,000 to fund the Federal TRIO programs, of which \$268,905,822 has been allocated for new awards for the Student Support Services (SSS) Program for 2010. The purpose of the SSS Program is to increase the number of disadvantaged low-income, first generation college students, as well as college students with disabilities, in the United States who successfully complete a program of study at the postsecondary level. The support services provided are intended to increase the retention and graduation rates for these students and facilitate their transfer from two-year to four-year colleges and universities. The support services provided should also foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of students who are limited English proficient, from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, homeless children and youths, students who are in a foster care or aging out of the foster care system, and other disconnected students. Student Support Services should also improve the financial and economic literacy of students. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on the final congressional action. However, they are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for the Federal TRIO Programs.

Source : <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-25389.pdf>

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