



Inside McNair News

- Scholar Profile: Olivia Turnross
- McNair Scholars Summer Program
- Research Experience Around the Nation
- McNair Alumni at UCSB
- McNair Writing Corner
- Meet our Junior Cohort
- Alumni Reflections with Darcy Alcántara
- McNair Class fo 2012
- Meet our New Graduate Mentors

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Our program has been successful in so many ways that should make all of us in the campus community very proud. All our students present their research at the URCA Symposium for Undergraduate Research and almost everyone offers oral presentations of their work at national McNair Research Conferences at the University of Maryland or UC-Berkeley. The second edition of the UCSB McNair Scholars Research Journal was published in June 2012. If you haven't read it, see our website.

What will increase these figures even more is the record from this past academic year (2011-2012) during which eleven students applied to graduate programs. All of them were accepted and fully funded at programs that included PhD programs at UC-Irvine, University of Miami, Notre Dame, Indiana, UC-Riverside, and Stanford and Master's programs at Duke, UC-Santa Barbara, Columbia, the University of Illinois, and the University of Southern California.

Now, in Fall 2012, we have fifteen seniors and twelve juniors in the program. Of the fifteen seniors, all but one are applying to post-baccalaureate programs, and the juniors are continuing research and investigating potential sites for undertaking research this coming summer at universities across the country. Two new graduate mentors have joined the staff. We look forward to the publication of a third volume of our research.

We invite all campus supporters and friends in the California McNair community to visit with us in the coming months so we might share our stories of success and collaborate on ways to continue the very worthy project of bringing more low-income, first generation students into the pipeline to the professoriate in the United States.

attained their doctorate, though some are now finishing their graduate student comprehensive examinations and working on dissertations. But in terms of all the other goals, our success has been extraordinary. After the first four years of the McNair Scholars Program, 95% of the students completed faculty-mentored research, 91% of students in the

Dr. Beth Schneider

Scholar Profile: Olivia Turnross



When I enrolled as a freshman at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) to study Biology in the College of Creative Studies, I never expected that I would become a McNair Scholar or find myself conducting research in Antarctica. I began working in the Hofmann Laboratory in the spring of my first year at UCSB. Dr. Gretchen Hofmann's lab focuses on understanding how organisms respond to and develop potential for adaptation to climate change induced stressors--ocean acidification in particular. As a senior, I am currently part of a 5-member, all-women, research team working at McMurdo Station, a U.S. Antarctic research station. We are studying the Antarctic urchin, *Sterechinus neumayari*, to determine how its larval development is affected by ocean warming and acidification. Our daily activities range from checking the parameters, such as pH and temperature of our flow-through seawater experiment system to heading out on snowmobiles across the sea ice to take water samples or deploy a scientific instrument. Being here has been an incredible experience on many fronts, socially, intellectually, and scientifically.

In the Fall of 2013, I intend to join the Sanford Laboratory, part of the University of California, Davis Graduate Group in Ecology. There I will continue with research similar to the work I have been conducting in the Hofmann Lab. I hope to investigate how sea urchin populations locally adapt to climate change, gain a mechanistic understanding of the processes driving both genetic and phenotypic changes, and understand how these change impact species interactions.

McNair has played an invaluable role in facilitating my research and preparedness for graduate school applications. By ensuring I am actively conducting research and in regular contact with my research mentor, McNair has strengthened key relationships and increased my productivity. Financial support has made research and graduate school applications feasible. Additionally, a generous staff has provided the ultimate logistical and emotional support. I love and benefit from every moment spent with the McNair cohort and staff, and my work with the program has paved the way to my current adventure in Antarctica. Anything is possible if you set your mind to it!



McNair Scholars Summer Program at UCSB

The summer is always an exciting and eventful time for the McNair Scholars Program. Half of our senior scholars conducted research at a variety of institutions across the country (please see article in this issue). Our scholars had the opportunity to meet scholars from Florida A&M University through the Educational Evaluation Research Scholars Program at UCSB and fellow McNair scholars from across the country who participated in the UCSB Graduate Division's Academic Research Consortium Summer 2012 Program.

All our scholars produced outstanding research in their programs. Here at UCSB, our scholars presented a poster of their research at the 2012 UCSB Undergraduate and Graduate Summer Research Colloquium, gave an oral presentation at the UCSB McNair Scholars Summer Program Symposium and developed a research paper. Seven of our seniors also presented their research at the 20th Annual McNair National Conference at UC Berkeley in August.



Summer Research around the Country

Lupe Cruz took part in the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She conducted research under Dr. Philip Bowman and Dr. Angela Ebreo from the School of Education and the National Center for Institutional Diversity on her project titled "Mentoring Experiences of Latina/o Students in Research Opportunity Programs." She presented her research at the SROP Symposium and the SROP Roundtable Session at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Lupe said this summer research experience "was one of the greatest learning experiences of my life!" She also strongly recommends that other UCSB students apply to SROP as you will "grow intellectually and build a bigger network of people who you will work with in the future."

Anthony Hearst attended the 2012 Student Airborne Research Program (SARP), which primarily took place at the University of California, Irvine; however, the first week he toured NASA's facilities in Palmdale, California and the second week collected data at vineyards in Delano, California. He worked with Dr. Susan Ustin from the Department of Land, Air and Water Resources at UC Davis on his project titled: "The SEBAL Evapotranspiration Model with Automated Hot and Cold Pixel Selection Applied at Delano Vineyards, C.A." Anthony said he enjoyed being able to choose his own project topic and that they "let us interns tackle anything we wanted, and they gave us the support we needed to accomplish our goals." For anyone thinking of applying to this program next year he said it was "an EXCELLENT learning opportunity and a lot of fun too!"

Amy Martinez participated in the UC Berkeley Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) at the University of California, Berkeley. While there, she worked with Dr. Patricia Penn Hilden and Dr. Francisco Diaz Casique in the Department of Ethnic Studies on her project titled: "Placas, Cultura, Y Carnalismo: Inking the Soul on the Social Body." She presented this research at UC Berkeley's SROP Symposium and, a few weeks later, at the 20th Annual McNair Research Conference at UC Berkeley. Amy said she "loved and appreciated" the experience and that it was great to be in a "room filled with scholars who were just as passionate, driven, and extremely intelligent!"

Alexis Meza spent part of the summer at the Oaxaca Summer Institute in Oaxaca, Mexico, and part at Universidad de El Salvador-Unión Salvadoreña de Estudiantes Universitarios Diplomado in San Salvador, El Salvador. These programs were directed by faculty from Mexico, the U.S., Canada and El Salvador. As part of the Oaxaca

Summer Institute she produced a diplomado titled, "Situación social, política, económica, de El Salvador a partir del análisis de la historia y el contexto coyuntural actual (Social, political and economic situation of El Salvador from a historical and current conjunctural analysis)." Alexis noted that the advantage of this experience was "being in other countries, especially countries related to my research interest." She added that, "as a history major with the aspiration of becoming a historian, these summer programs allowed me to learn about the histories of these countries while actually residing there, seeing historical places first-hand as well as engaging with folks living different realities that we often only read about."

Juan Osuna took part in the University of California Washington Program (UCDC) this past summer. Through this program he obtained an internship at Brazil Industries Coalition (BIC), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. During his internship, he assisted in organizing BIC's annual event called Brazil on the Hill. Juan said he enjoyed the program because it "gave me the opportunity to experience what its like to work for an NGO and the type of work that goes with it." He said this internship also gave him a unique opportunity to "learn a lot about the current issues that are happening in Brazil and its private sector."

Marya Perez participated in the Summer Applied Biotechnology Research Experience (SABRE) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She worked under Dr. Samir Mitragotri in the Chemical Engineering Department on her project titled: "Mucoadhesive Intestinal Devices for Oral Delivery of Macromolecules." She presented this work at the UCSB Summer Poster Colloquium and presented it again at the MAES National Conference - Fall 2012. Mayra says "SABRE is an amazing program for any student interested in a STEM field."

Billi Jo Starr attended the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program (SURF) at the University of California, Irvine under the mentorship of Dr. Cheryl Maxson in the department of Criminology, Law and Society in the School of Social Ecology. She presented her project "Communication and Character Development: Keystones in the New Transformative Justice Model" at the University of California, Irvine's Summer Research Symposium this August 2012. Billi Jo said it was an honor to be selected for the SURF program and that "the faculty, staff and graduate students at UCI were welcoming, incredibly knowledgeable, and very supportive throughout the summer."



From Scholar to Mentor: McNair Alumni at UCSB



In 2012-2013, our program staff was enhanced by the exceptional work of UCSB graduate students: Todd Avellar, Nichole Garcia, and Carlos Jimenez. Their paths provide us with wonderful examples of the trajectory of McNair Scholars about which people are always asking. What does happen to McNair Scholars after they graduate and go on to graduate school? Carlos came to UCSB from De Paul University; he is now an advanced graduate student in the Film and Media Studies Department who received the prestigious Ford Foundation Fellowship to support his doctoral work in this academic year. Todd was an undergraduate at UCSB receiving a B.A. in Psychology and Applied Psychology who applied to graduate school here as well as elsewhere in the country. He is now in the doctoral program of the Department of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology at the Gevirtz School of Education, having found a perfect

fit between his scholarly and professional interests and those of his faculty mentor. Finally, after coming to UCSB from her undergraduate experience as a McNair Scholar at the University of Utah, Nichole just graduated with a Master's degree after two years in the graduate program of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. Assessing her professional goals and where they can best be met, Nichole applied to and just began doctoral studies at UCLA in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Students and staff will miss each of them this year, even as we are extremely pleased with their progress and continued success.

The McNair Writing Corner by Dr. Ellen Broidy

The Personal is Professional



Fall is a particularly busy, not to mention stressful, time for McNair seniors. Before the official quarter even begins, seniors attend a daylong “boot camp” designed to get them started on their graduate school applications. While there is much about the application process that is both routine and familiar, there are certain aspects that present unique challenges. It is probably not a stretch to place the infamous statement of purpose, or SOP, high on the list of difficult hurdles to jump. At least that is how it seems as seniors move beyond the first attempts at drafting SOPs at boot camp.

Throughout their tenure in the McNair program, scholars get a lot of practice writing. By the time they reach their senior year, they have created everything from 250 word abstracts to text for poster sessions to fully-realized research papers. There is, however, little that prepares them for the unique task of developing the SOP. A statement of purpose is both a very personal articulation of academic, research and professional interests as well as a public relations document designed to make your application stand out from the crowd. It truly does provide the opportunity for the applicant to shine but in our experience we have found that it is not easy to

overcome the natural reticence about bragging about yourself. The task becomes even more daunting for seniors applying to programs that require both a statement of purpose and a personal statement as the instructions often contain an explicit warning against repetition.

To help the next generation of McNair Scholars face down demon SOP, here are a few obvious tips that often get lost in the bustle of application preparation. First, familiarize yourself with the requirements of each application. Determine how many statements you need to submit and how much repetition might be permissible. Read each prompt carefully; this is where you find the issues the admissions committee expects you to address. Check for length limits. Think critically about the organization of your statement. Aim for maximum (and relevant) impact and be sure to tie it all up at the end. Lastly, save words by avoiding repeating information readily found elsewhere in your application.

The SOP truly is a time to shine. Following these few simple guidelines (and making sure to revise, edit, edit, and revise), should help make an application stand out from the crowd.



Our New McNair Scholars



Nathan Alamillo
 Major: Chicana/o Studies & Sociology
 Minor: Applied Psychology
 Hometown: Oxnard, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Victor Rios
 Faculty Mentor Department: Sociology
 Research Interests: Latino educational pipeline and public health in urban communities.



Jorge Ballesteros
 Major: Psychology and Sociology
 Hometown: Sylmar, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Steve Smith
 Faculty Mentor Department: Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology
 Research Interests: Athletes self-esteem and personality



Josue Barnes
 Major: Pharmacology
 Hometown: Claremont, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Norbert Reich
 Faculty Mentor Department: Chemistry
 Research Interests: Drug design and drug delivery



Laura Harwood
 Major: College of Creative Studies, Literature
 Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentors: Dr. Beth Schneider & Dr. Gina Vallis
 Faculty Mentors' Departments: Sociology and Writing Program
 Research Interests: Disability studies, literary theory, cultural studies and continental philosophy



Amieris Lavender
 Major: Global Studies and Feminist Studies
 Hometown: Long Beach, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. John Yun
 Faculty Mentor Department: Education
 Research Interests: Retention and academic success of African-American students



Michelle Len
 Major: Computer Science
 Hometown: Milpitas, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Diana Franklin
 Faculty Mentor Department: Computer Science
 Research Interests: Computer graphics, augmented reality, and scientific computing



Noe Lopez
 Major: Latin American and Iberian Studies/
 Spanish
 Hometown: Oxnard, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentors: Dr. Juan Vincente Palerm & Dr. Emiko Saldivar
 Faculty Mentors' Department: Anthropology
 Research Interests: Mixtec identity formation in transnational diaspora



Monica Martinez
 Major: Mathematics
 Hometown: Anaheim, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Bjorn Birnir
 Faculty Mentor Department: Mathematics
 Research Interests: Simulations of mathematical models



Erika Matadamas
 Major: Global Studies
 Hometown: Monterey, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ralph Armbruster
 Faculty Mentor Department: Chicana/o Studies
 Research Interests: Hunger strikes in the UC system



Marilyne Tamayo
 Major: Classics: Emphasis in Language and Literature
 Hometown: Los Angeles, CA
 Graduation Date: June 2014
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Ralph Gallucci
 Faculty Mentor Department: Classics
 Research Interests: The historical accuracy of the Mycenaean Bronze Age as portrayed by Homer's Epics



Junior Scholars with UCSB McNair Alum Ahmad Nabhan Visiting Research Labs at San Francisco State University



Junior Scholars Exploring Graduate Programs at UC Santa Cruz

Alumni Reflection with Darcy Alcántara



Darcy Alcántara belonged to the first cohort of the UCSB McNair Scholars Program and is a testament to the success of the program. This fall she began her fourth year at the University of Massachusetts, Boston as a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program. Darcy credits the McNair program with “equipping [her] with the skills and knowledge that [she] needed to get through the process of applying to graduate schools.” She also said the McNair staff and Graduate Mentors provided the tools to successfully apply to graduate school. Darcy advises the junior scholars to focus on building connections with faculty who share their research interests, both at UCSB and other institutions. She urges the senior scholars to take advantage of free time and to “maximize your efficiency to get things done,” such as working on the statements of purpose, writing sample and applications. She would like to emphasize to all scholars that while we all love living in California, “living in another state - or city for that matter - can be an exciting and an immense developmental opportunity.” Darcy ends by saying that “being part of the McNair program is a great privilege and a source of marvelous mentorship for your professional and academic endeavors.”

McNair Graduating Class of 2012!



Afiya Browne – PhD, Criminology, Law and Society – University of California, Irvine

Elizabeth Gonzalez Jimenez – PhD, History – University of Miami

Janai Harris – MSW, Social Work – University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign

Channel McLewis – MA, Sociology and Education – Columbia University

Laila Nur – MA, Mathematics Education – University of Southern California

Nicole Perez - PhD, Sociology - Notre Dame University

Alaina Roberts – PhD, History – Indiana University, Bloomington

Angel Rodriguez – MA, Latin American and Iberian Studies – University of California, Santa Barbara

Luis Trujillo – PhD, Ethnic Studies - University of California, Riverside

Sabrina-Anne Wu – MA, Environmental Management - Duke University

Rosalia Zaraté – PhD, Education – Stanford University

Our New Graduate Mentors



Holly Roose is a PhD student in the History Department with an emphasis in Black Studies at UCSB. She was a McNair Scholar at Portland State University where she received a BA in Black Studies and English. She went on to earn an MA in African and African American Studies from Columbia University. Her research examines Marcus Garvey and the Black Nationalist movement of the

early 20th century in the Western United States. Holly works as a Teaching Assistant for the History Department and the Black Studies Department and mentors youth at Fighting Back mentoring program in downtown Santa Barbara.



Shardé Davis is a PhD student working with Dr. Tamara Affi in the Department of Communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). A 2010 UCSB McNair Scholar alumna, Shardé received her BA in Communication and Feminist Studies. Her interdisciplinary research uses theories and approaches from Communication, Feminist, and Ethnic Studies to investigate ways that ethnicity and gender shape relational dynamics and

communication processes. In addition to her research endeavors, Shardé also serves as a Teaching Assistant for undergraduate Communication courses, including Family Communication, Gender and Communication, and Communication and Aging.