



# UCSB McNair Scholars Newsletter

Summer/Fall 2016

[www.mcnair.ucsb.edu](http://www.mcnair.ucsb.edu)

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Transitions occur regularly in the McNair Scholars Program. Predictably, each year we have the departing McNair Scholars. After two years of faculty mentored research, participation in seminars and workshops which prepare them for entrance to graduate school, and the arduous process of making application to graduate programs, the majority of the 2016 Seniors who applied to Master's or Doctoral programs are going (a list of those seniors and their destinations appears inside).

After six years as the Program Coordinator, Micaela Morgan has moved into a new position on campus as the Director of K-12 Programs. Students miss her, but happily get to see her regularly on campus. We hope to have a new Coordinator by early 2017 to take Micaela's place. Two of our graduate mentors have left McNair: Holly Roose (History) and Carlos Jimenez (Film and Media Studies). Both Holly and Carlos were McNair Scholars elsewhere when undergraduates, who found themselves at UCSB where they gave back to the program that did so much for them. We are so grateful to them. Filling their shoes are three new graduate student mentors: Cruz Ortiz (doctoral student in Bren School of Environmental Sciences and Management); Maddie Nolan (doctoral student in Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology), and Gina Vanegas (doctoral student in Counseling, Clinical and School Psychology).

Given the goal of the McNair Scholars Program, which is to encourage and support our UCSB scholars to enter doctoral study, we are delighted to report on some transitions of our alumni who have attained their doctorate. Since highlighting Dr. Racquel Domingo in

our Spring 2016 newsletter, who completed her PhD in Immunology at the University of Michigan, we are very pleased to report on several others who have completed their doctoral work. Richard Espinoza and Todd Avellar now have doctorates from the Wright Institute and the UCSB Department of Counseling, Clinical and School Psychology, respectively. With a story appearing in this issue is Dr. Shardé Davis with a degree in Communication, now a tenure-track assistant professor at the University of Connecticut.

If you haven't yet seen it, please read the scholarly work of some of our seniors in Volume 6 of the UCSB McNair Scholars Research Journal, published in June 2016 and on our website. The articles range across the disciplines with excellent work in Black Studies, Psychological and Brain Sciences, Economics, Education, Sociology, Political Science, Geography, and Counseling Psychology. We very much appreciate the contributions of the faculty mentors whose efforts on behalf of our students allow them to produce a first publication in what we hope is a long and stellar academic career.

As another academic year begins, we want to thank the Executive Vice Chancellor, David Marshall and the offices of the deans of the College of Letters and Sciences and Engineering for continuing to invest in the UCSB McNair Scholars Program, and the many UCSB professional staff for their support of our students. We are so proud to be part of a campus that serves as a champion for our work.

*Dr. Beth Schneider*

The UCSB McNair scholarship Program is supported by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and the deans of the College of Letters and Sciences and the College of Engineering. Additionally, our science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) scholars are partially funded by Edison International.

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# The McNair Scholars Research Journal 2016

**Jamelia Harris**

*The Concrete Roses: An Intersectional Analysis of Black Girls Unique Challenges and Vulnerabilities in the School-To- Prison Nexus*

**Jorge Dominguez**

*Habit Formation in Exercise: An Empirical Analysis of Exercise Habits*

**Jacqueline Lepe**

*The Effects of Residential Mobility and Neighborhood Context on Released Prisoners' Recidivism: A Review of Evidence*

**Anibal Lopez**

*Deliberation in the Federal Open Market Committee during Economic Challenges*

**Eugenie Guzelian**

*Examining Sex Differences in Stress-Induced Potentiation of Ethanol Sensitivity*

**Bertin Solis**

*Latino Parental Engagement: A Case Study of Four Latino Immigrant Parents' Engagement with the Local Control and Accountability Plan*

**Paola Villegas**

*Vivimos en Conflictu (We Live in Conflict): University-Induced Displacement in Isla Vista, CA*

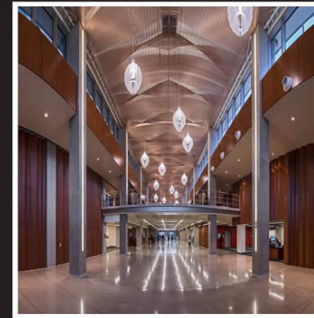
**Adriana Sanchez**

*Understanding Academic Resilience: Latina Community College Transfer Students' Experiences*

**Sylvia Garcia**

*Why are Polar Bears Still Being Hunted?*

UCSB McNair Scholars  
Research Journal



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA  
2016 Volume 6

To view this issue and previous issues, please go to: <http://mcnair.ucsb.edu/journal.html>

## Class of 2016 Heading to Graduate School

**Gisella Diaz** - PhD, Program in Integrative Neuroscience, University of Chicago. Gisella is the recipient of a 5-year Social Sciences Fellowship.

**Jorge Dominguez** – MA, Economic, Columbia University (beginning fall 2017)

**Jamelia Harris** – PhD in Urban Schooling, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Jamelia received a 5-year Eugene Cota-Robles Fellowship

**Jacqueline Lepe** - PhD, Sociology, University of California, Berkeley. Jacqueline was awarded a 6-year Chancellor's Fellowship.

**Anibal Lopez** – JD, University of Iowa School of Law

**Andriana Sanchez** – PhD, Counseling Psychology, UCSB

**Bertin Solis** – PhD, Education, UCSB.

**Joleana Shurley** – MS, Evolution of Language and Cognition Program, University of Edinburgh

**Paola Villegas** – PhD, Sociology, Northwestern University. Paola is the recipient of a fellowship covering 5 years of graduate work.

## **Congratulations and Farewell to Micaela Morgan**

For over 6 years, Program Coordinator Micaela Morgan was the first person McNair Scholars, staff, and visitors saw as they came through the front door of the office. With a ready smile and a steady hand, Micaela answered questions, offered guidance, and gently but firmly assisted students as they navigated the occasionally challenging waters of the McNair Scholars Program. Always available to both students and staff, Micaela wore many hats and moved effortlessly between her multiple responsibilities.

This past September, Micaela left the McNair Program to assume the new and challenging role as Director of K-12 Programs associated with the Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) Program and the Pathways Program, both under the auspices of the Office of Education Partnerships (OEP). The mission of OEP is to aid first-generation college and low-income students in pursuing and succeeding in college and/or science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. Micaela's new position dovetails nicely with her academic research interests. Her dissertation, "The STEM Pipeline for Community College Students with Learning Disabilities" is but another indication of her commitment to helping all students achieve their goals.

In reflecting upon her time at McNair, Micaela had this to say: "Working with the McNair Scholars Program has had a profound impact on my life and I look forward to seeing what everyone accomplishes in their lives. I would love to find ways to collaborate and work with scholars, alumni, and staff in the future to diversify academia, eliminate inequities, and generally increase academic success for all."

Congratulations to Micaela on her exciting new position and the completion of her doctoral degree.

## **UCSB Summer Program 2016 Highlights**



After a team building activity that required showing off our best dance moves, our summer program kicked off with a downtown scavenger hunt. Twenty-one McNair Scholars participated in the Scholars Summer Program here at UCSB, while another five conducted research at various campuses around the nation (Duke University, Notre Dame University, University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin, Utah State University).



Five McNair Scholars presented their research at the 22nd Annual SAEOPP McNair/SSS Scholars Research Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Braving Atlanta's heat and humidity, our scholars enjoyed a tour of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Site and the World of Coca-Cola. The scholars also got to meet political activist Dolores Huerta (co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association) when they ran into her at the airport. In addition to producing impressive original research, the scholars who were with us in Santa Barbara were also able to reflect on the advice given by three McNair Scholar alumni (Nathaniel Burke, Sebastian Ferrada, Fatima Suarez) who participated in a 'Life after McNair' Panel.

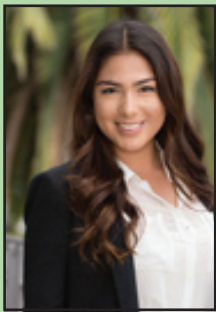


Our scholars summer research cumulated in impressive oral presentations at the McNair Colloquium and in posters they presented at the campus wide UCSB Undergraduate Summer Research Colloquium. Overall it was another great summer for UCSB McNair, filled with fun, hard work, great memories and high caliber research.

# Edison – McNair Scholars Summer 2016

This summer, with the generous support of the Edison International Program, 12 students participated in the Edison-McNair summer research program. The Edison-McNair scholar summer session is focused on students who are majoring in computer science, environmental science, mechanical engineering, computer engineering, and electrical engineering. These students undertook an intensive summer program that involved weekly seminars in addition to working full time on independent research projects. The seminars touched on a variety of topics such as CV development, how to do an oral presentation, and how to create a conference poster. There was a great variety of research projects conducted by Edison scholars. Topics included engineering projects associated with the Hyperloop project proposed by Elon Musk, modeling the movement of seismic waves after earthquakes, and the impact of extreme drought on grassland restoration in Southern California. All students presented their work in a poster symposium at the UCSB Undergraduate Summer Research Colloquium.

## Introducing the Class of 2018 McNair Cohort



### ***Fernanda Castellon***

**Major:** Psychology & Chicana/o Studies  
**Hometown:** Puerto Vallarta, Mexico  
**Graduation:** June 2018  
**Mentors:** Drs. Robert and Lynn Koegel  
**Mentor's Department:** Education  
**Research Interests:** Autism, Intervention Methods with a Cultural Emphasis



### ***Jorge Moran***

**Major:** Global Studies  
**Hometown:** Camarillo, CA  
**Graduation:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Bridget Coggins  
**Mentor's Department:** Political Science  
**Research Interests:** International Relations/ Policy, China, South East Asia, Security/ Hegemony



### ***Marco Cerrato***

**Major:** Physics  
**Hometown:** Los Angeles, CA  
**Graduation:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Daniel Blumenthal  
**Mentor's Department:** Electrical & Computer Engineering  
**Research Interests:** Fiber-Optic Gyros, Rotational Sensors in Closed Loop Environments



### ***Francisco (Paco) Olvera***

**Major:** English  
**Hometown:** Oceanside, CA  
**Graduation:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Felice Blake  
**Mentor's Department:** English  
**Research Interests:** Chicana/o Literature, Identity, "Double Consciousness"



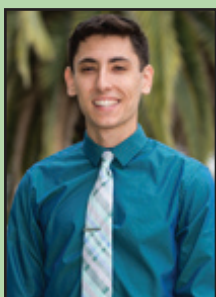
### ***Zingha Foma***

**Major:** Theatre  
**Hometown:** Bafoussam, Cameroon  
**Graduation:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Mhoze Chikowero  
**Mentor's Department:** History  
**Research Interests:** African Cultural Art, Fashion, Traditional Dress for Power and Resistance



### ***Sirenía Sanchez***

**Major:** Communication & Psychology  
**Hometown:** Montclair, CA  
**Graduation Date:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Nancy Collins  
**Mentor's Department:** Psychological and Brain Sciences  
**Research Interests:** Social Psychology, Positive Psychology, Close Relationship, Self-esteem



### ***Angel Gonzalez***

**Major:** Earth Science & Geophysics  
**Hometown:** Carson, CA  
**Graduation Date:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. Robin Matoza  
**Mentor's Department:** Earth Science  
**Research Interests:** Geophysics, Volcanology, Planetary Science



### ***Nancy Torres***

**Major:** Environmental Science  
**Hometown:** Carson, CA  
**Graduation Date:** June 2018  
**Mentor:** Dr. David Valentine  
**Mentor's Department:** Earth Science  
**Research Interests:** Oceanography, Marine Biology, Global Climate Change

## Reflections From Former McNair Graduate Mentors

Since 2005, I have been associated with the McNair Scholars Program in some capacity. As an undergraduate at Portland State University I was a McNair Scholar. Later, after receiving my Master's at Columbia University, I worked as Assistant Director of the McNair Program at San Diego State University. After being admitted to the UCSB doctoral program in History, I had the opportunity to continue my service to McNair as a graduate mentor and have worked in this capacity for the past four years. It has been a great pleasure to be able to work with a program which was so instrumental in my life as an undergraduate. As many of our alumni can attest, without the McNair Scholars Program, most of us would never have had the opportunity to attend graduate school. What makes this program so special is the fact that it is open to all majors, a rarity in today's academic scholar's programming which puts a heavy emphasis on STEM fields. I am overjoyed each year to see our scholars succeed and go on to do some pretty amazing things with the skills they learn as McNair Scholars. In all the years I have worked with McNair Scholars, it never ceases to amaze me how resilient these students are, often overcoming extreme adversities and yet still able to maintain a rigorous academic schedule.

The most important contribution our scholars make is through their goals of diversifying the professoriate; some of the best faculty in our university system come from low income, first generation, and underrepresented backgrounds. Through their own struggles and tribulations, they bring with them the ability to connect with incoming undergraduate students and this is the legacy of McNair that I hope will continue with our current and future McNair scholars for years to come. To all my past and current scholars: I hope you will remember your experiences and the support you receive through programs such as these, and will continue the McNair tradition of lifting up those who come behind you.

HollyRoose

At DePaul University in Chicago, the McNair Scholars Program came into my life during a period when I desperately needed guidance and a community. I was a commuter student traveling one-hour each way and working almost full-time as a bank teller. I was so focused on helping my parents financially that I didn't have time for student organizations or on-campus events. The mentorship I received at McNair opened my eyes and made me rethink my priorities. After talking to the program's director, Yared Tamene, I decided to quit my job, take a pay-cut, and find on-campus employment to focus on coursework and to be open about what my future could be. I knew it was a gamble, but I also understood that college was temporary and that I needed to immerse myself.

As a mentor at UCSB's McNair Scholars Program, I have learned that the importance of our work as staff is not to tell students what to do (I mean, of course we do that too) but it is to show them the bigger picture. As students, they certainly learn the mechanics of research, but sometimes it's having someone tell you that to be an academic is to be an artist. The hope is that students realize that what they are doing through research is learning to use their voice and written words to reach out to the world. This art form takes practice and it will take decades to perfect, but for many of us, McNair is the starting point.

When I met with the students at McNair I often thought to myself, "I can't wait to see you as a professor." I thought this because of the humility, joy, and resilience I saw in them and I wish I had seen more of this in professors I interacted with throughout my time in academia. To the current students, I just want to say that when you earn your Ph.D. and enter a classroom as a professor, remember how you were with your family, how you were with your friends, and who you were at McNair.

I am so grateful to have been part of McNair and I understand fully that I would not be the person I am today without the opportunities that McNair gave me. Currently, I am in the midst of preparing to file my dissertation, which has focused on the media technology (social media, community radio, mobile phones, and automated-harvesters) and farm workers. This work comes out of the confidence I learned through McNair to trust in my words and trust that my experiences had value.

Carlos Jimenez

## Meet our New Graduate Mentors

**Cruz Ortiz Jr.** is a PhD student in Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at UCSB. He received his BS in Earth Science from the University of California, Santa Cruz and his MS in Environmental Engineering Sciences from the University of Florida. Cruz is currently a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow. His research investigates the environmental implications of nanotechnology, specifically the fate and transport of nanomaterials in the environment.

**Madeline Nolan** is a doctoral student in the department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology at UCSB. Her research is focused on the ecological restoration of native habitats in Southern California with an emphasis on native perennial grasslands. In particular, she is interested in how climate change will alter native grassland communities and impact how restoration is conducted in the state. Prior to her graduate work at UCSB, she obtained her bachelor's degree from the Ohio State University and her master's degree from the University of Michigan.

**Gina Vanegas** is a PhD student in the Department of Counseling, Clinical & School Psychology with an emphasis in Counseling Psychology at UCSB. She is a McNair alum who received her BA in Psychology and her M.Ed. in School Counseling from Georgia State University. Her research focuses on the use of technology as a means to increase access and improve utilization of mental health services for Latinos. Gina is also an Intern Clinician at Sanctuary Centers of Santa Barbara, a non-profit mental health services organization.

## Alumni Reflection with Shardé Davis



September, she began her professional academic career as an Assistant Professor of Communications at University of Connecticut in Storrs.

Shardé decided to pursue a career in academia as she believes the versatility that a doctoral degree carries will help her expand and disseminate her research outside of academia and into the community. She looks forward to the freedom that comes with a faculty position at a Research 1 institution. She says that as an undergraduate researcher it was difficult to translate her passion into a research project. Now, with the skills she gained in her doctoral program, she is able to translate what is at the core of her passion into research projects that are socially meaningful. With this in mind, Shardé's advice for McNair Scholars is to "find the golden thread that ties it all together," add-

ing that remembering why students chose a particular research topic and their passion will carry them through the challenging times. She also believes that undergraduate researchers need to cultivate self-care habits. She thinks this is especially important for people of color who may at times have multiple responsibilities in addition to being a full time student.

Dr. Shardé Davis is grateful for the preparation, resources and support McNair gave her as these have been instrumental in her success. She says her success is also the success of those who have supported her throughout her journey.

UCSB McNair alumni and former Graduate Mentor Shardé Davis graduated in Spring 2010 with a Bachelor's degree in Communications and Feminist Studies. In 2012, Shardé attained her Masters Degree from UCSB and in 2016 received her PhD from the University of Iowa in Communications under the guidance of Dr. Tamara Afifi, who had served as her McNair faculty mentor at UCSB. For her dissertation, Shardé continued to develop her research interests on the experiences of Black women. In

## McNair Scholars Receive Recognitions and Awards

**Jamelia Harris** received the 2016 Thomas More Storke Award for Excellence, the campus's highest student honor for outstanding scholarship and extraordinary service to the University, its students, and the community.

**Adriana Sanchez and Bertin Solis** were co-recipients of the McNair Scholars Program Clyde Woods Award which recognizes a student or students who, through word and deed, demonstrates that being a McNair Scholar means more than simply steady progress through the program. The recipients are committed to doing the hard work necessary to "change the face of higher education," and thereby benefit us all.

**Katie Correia** was awarded the 2016 Mathilda Christiansen Kuehl and Willian A. Christiansen Scholarship in the Humanities.

**Sylvia Garcia** was the recipient of the Akella Family Scholarship in Geography.

**Jorge Moran and Sirenia Sanchez** won U.S. Department of State Gilman International Scholarships to study abroad. Jorge is currently attending Fudan University in Shanghai, China and Sirenia is studying at the University of Manchester in

