

2002

Introductory Materials

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Message from the Dean

It is once again my pleasure to introduce this 6th volume of the GVSU McNair Scholars Journal. The 16 presentations in this issue continue the tradition of high quality undergraduate research, essential as we assist another class of McNair Scholars prepare for graduate studies.

I offer my congratulations to the authors and my sincere appreciation to the faculty mentors and to the McNair staff.



Mary A. Seeger, Dean

Academic Resources and Special Programs



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY

***Before You Can Make A Dream Come True,
You Must First Have One.*** — Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D.

Ronald Erwin McNair was born October 21, 1950, in Lake City, South Carolina, to Carl and Pearl McNair. He attended North Carolina A&T State University where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. degree in physics in 1971. McNair then enrolled in the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976, at the age of 26, he earned his Ph.D. in physics.

McNair soon became a recognized expert in laser physics while working as a staff physicist with Hughes Research Laboratory. He was selected by NASA for the space shuttle program in 1978 and was a mission specialist aboard the 1984 flight of the USS *Challenger* space shuttle.

After his death in the USS *Challenger* space shuttle accident in January 1986, members of Congress provided funding for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. The goal is to encourage low-income, first generation students, as well as students who are traditionally under-represented in graduate schools, to expand their opportunities by pursuing graduate studies.



Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program

The Purpose

The McNair Scholars Program is designed to prepare highly talented undergraduates to pursue doctoral degrees and to increase the number of individuals (from the target group) on college and university faculties.

Who are McNair Scholars?

The McNair Scholars are highly talented undergraduate students who are from families with no previous college graduate, low-income background or groups under-represented at the graduate level for doctoral studies. The program accepts students from all disciplines.

Program Services

The McNair Scholars are matched with faculty research mentors. They receive academic counseling, mentoring, advising, and GRE preparation. In addition to the above services, the McNair Scholars have opportunities to attend research seminars, conduct research, and present their findings orally or written via poster presentations. In the first semester of their senior year, the scholars receive assistance with the graduate school application process.

Funding

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is a TRIO Program funded through the United States Department of Education and Grand Valley State University.

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