Introductory Materials

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Grand Valley State University

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Grand Valley State University is proud to be the home of our Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program now in its tenth year. The activities of our scholars and their mentors continue to reflect the spirit of Dr. Ronald E. McNair, and to serve as a model for everyone involved in assisting students to prepare for graduate study.

Special thanks to the faculty mentors for affording these capable students the opportunity to improve their research skills as they begin their post-baccalaureate work.

And congratulations to the 11 GVSU McNair Scholars whose work appears in this edition of the Grand Valley State University McNair Scholars Journal. Your projects reflect well on you, and enrich the life of the university community.

Mary A. Seeger
Dean

Message from the Dean

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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 groups) 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 finding 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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