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Notes from the Directors

James A. Knapp

Eastern Michigan University, jknapp1@emich.edu

Betty Brown-Chappell

Eastern Michigan University, bbrownch@emich.edu

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Notes from the Directors

This inaugural issue of the EMU McNair Chronicles marks an important milestone for the McNair Scholars whose work is presented here, as well as the McNair Program, itself less than a year old. Over the course of the first year of EMU's McNair Program, I have had the pleasure of seeing the program develop. More importantly, I have witnessed a group of talented scholars come into their own as researchers. The work collected here represents a selection of the research presented at this year's McNair Summer Research Institute Symposium. The scholars who presented their work in that forum, including those whose work is included in this issue, demonstrate the immense talent of EMU's undergraduate students and that of the McNair Scholars in particular. I wish to congratulate all of the scholars on their hard work and commitment to undergraduate research. I am confident that we will be hearing about their work for years to come.

Dr. James A. Knapp
Director, EMU Honors College

The last nine months have been exhilarating as I have become acquainted with a group of students who are sure to distinguish themselves in their respective professions. Among this first class of EMU's McNair Scholars are not only individuals who exhibit outstanding academic potential, but also those who are dedicated to explore creative ideas and solutions to society's myriad problems. The students' work that you will read would not be possible without the dedication of our faculty mentors, seminar speakers and McNair staff.

I especially want to compliment the extraordinary effort of our editor, Alexis Kielb, who coupled technical writing expertise with a tight focus on our goal to share the work of McNair scholars in a timely way within the academic community.

To develop this program involved leadership vision and team work. With the leadership of Dr. James Knapp, a small group of faculty worked together for over eighteen months to obtain the Department of Education grant which enabled EMU to implement the McNair Scholars

Program. Housed in the Honors College, the Program's goals include college completion, successful application to and graduation from a doctoral program. To facilitate the achievement of the goals, sophomores, juniors and seniors receive intensive training on research methods, funding to conduct research plus in-depth and personalized advising. The selection criteria include U.S. citizenship, a minimum grade point average of 3.0, first-generation college student or membership in an under-represented group (African-American, Native American/Alaskan Native or Hispanic).

Thirty-five students are enrolled in the program each year and selection is made during the fall and winter semesters. For further information, please contact 734-487-0342 or visit our web site at www.emich.edu/honors/mcnair.

This program is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a first-generation college graduate who became a physicist, received his doctoral degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and later he trained as an astronaut. Sadly, Dr. McNair was killed on the Challenger space ship. However, Dr. McNair's words are appropriate to commemorate this inaugural McNair Chronicles: "Whether or not you reach your goals in life depends entirely on how well you prepare for them and how badly you want them. You are eagles! Stretch your wings and fly to the sky."

Dr. Betty Brown-Chappell
Director, McNair Scholars Program
Associate Director, Honors College