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Notes from the Directors

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Notes from the Directors

Publication in the EMU *McNair Chronicles* marks an important milestone for the McNair Scholars whose work is presented here, as well as the McNair Program, now in its third year of operation. Over the course of the first two years 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 that 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

I am sure that this second-year class of McNair Scholars will distinguish themselves in their respective professions as researchers and teaching faculty. During the ten-week 2009 Summer Research Institute these students produced the fine work that you will read, and this suggests that they are suited to the rigors of graduate school and ultimately to work in the academy. Also, I must thank the faculty mentors, seminar speakers, and McNair staff who made significant contributions to each Scholar's achievement.

I especially want to compliment the exceptional effort of our copy editor, David Erik Nelson, whose teaching skill and technical writing expertise greatly facilitated our goal of sharing the Scholars' work in timely way within the academic community.

To develop this program involved leadership vision and teamwork. With the leadership of Dr. James Knapp, a small group of faculty worked together for over eighteen months to obtain the Department of Education federal grant that 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 program goals, sophomores, juniors, and seniors receive intensive training on research methods, funding to conduct research, plus in-depth and personal advising. The selection criteria include U.S. citizenship, a minimum grade point average of 3.0, and being a first-generation college student or member of an underrepresented 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, the son of a skilled tradesman and a teacher who became a physicist, received his doctoral degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later trained as an astronaut. Sadly, Dr. McNair was killed on the Challenger space ship. However, Dr. McNair's words remain an inspiration: "Whether or not you reach our 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