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Directors' Comments

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Directors' Comments

Dr. Rebecca Sipe

I am pleased to have this opportunity to applaud the exceptional work of McNair Scholars and the outstanding McNair staff who have made this volume possible. Over the past two years, these students have engaged in rigorous research experiences, participated in many workshops and completed major research projects with the help of their faculty mentors and the McNair staff. It is my great honor to be a part of the efforts to nurture their development into the academic leaders of tomorrow.

The McNair Chronicles offers a glimpse into the future. The McNair scholars' research that you will read in this volume represents the culmination of ambitious research projects spanning a host of disciplines. The student scholars whose work is included have worked closely with their Director, Dr. Heather Neff, and faculty mentors to develop essential research skills necessary for graduate study. Soon, these scholars will take their places as mentors, teachers, and co-researchers for other students who will benefit from their passion, commitment, and expertise.

As a first generation college student myself, I am exceptionally proud to have the opportunity to support our McNair Scholars as they move forward into a future in the academy. I offer my thanks to the faculty mentors and the McNair staff for their hard work.

For our McNair Scholars, the sky is the limit.

Dr. Rebecca Sipe
Director, Eastern Michigan University Honors College



Dr. Heather Neff

Congratulations to the ten students whose work is collected in this, the fourth volume of the *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, formerly known as the *McNair Chronicles*. These papers reflect a breadth of academic interests and research paradigms while illustrating both the intellectual range and social commitment of these young scholars.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is designed to support high-achieving students on their paths toward doctoral studies. McNair Scholars attend two years of weekly seminars intended to strengthen their skills in research writing, leadership and personal development. Mentored by a faculty member in their academic discipline, McNair scholars develop a research project for presentation on the Eastern Michigan University campus and at a national McNair conference. Scholars complete their McNair assignments while undertaking a full load of classes and, in most cases, working. Each performs a minimum of twenty hours of community service and agrees to mentor a younger program participant. Many participate in the McNair Student Society and all attend cultural and artistic events. Their work

ethic is astounding and their dedication to succeed is a source of inspiration to those of us who have the pleasure of guiding them.

Preparing these articles for publication presented us with a number of editorial decisions. Because the authors represent a wide range of academic disciplines, we determined that each article should use the style guidelines appropriate to its particular discipline. Thus, the papers in this volume will be edited in the MLA, APA or Chicago style, respectively.

I wish to extend my deepest thanks to the faculty, staff and administrators who are vital to the success of our program. Dr. Rebecca Sipe, EMU Honors College Director, is tireless in her vision, patience and support of our efforts. We are particularly grateful to Heather Holmes, Bette Warren, Jack Kay, Caryn Charter and Claresta Davis for their contributions to McNair this past year. Laurie Walker provided individual support to the scholars in writing their papers; Kelli Massa and Shayna Rodriguez developed the electronic version of this journal and Aquila Sams assisted with editing. Finally, the EMU McNair Scholars Program could not succeed without the selfless dedication of Cynthia Rodrigues, our Assistant Director, and Kimberly Freeman, our Program Specialist.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a first-generation physicist and astronaut who lost his life in the 1986 Challenger Space Shuttle explosion. The EMU McNair Program annually serves 35 sophomores, juniors and seniors from first-generation, low income or under-represented groups (African American, Native American, Hispanic or Alaskan Native / Pacific Islander) with a minimum 3.0 GPA. The program prepares its participants for the admission to and successful completion of doctoral studies. For more information, please call (734) 487-8240 or visit our website: www.emich.edu/mcnair.

Once again, congratulations to the 2011 McNair Scholars!

Dr. Heather Neff
Director, Eastern Michigan University McNair Scholars Program
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