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Directors' Comments

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Directors' Comments

We are very proud of the ten students whose work is presented in this, the fifth volume of the McNair Scholars Research Journal. These papers are the work of young people whose intellectual curiosity and commitment to research will make them leaders in their academic disciplines.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, supports high-achieving students on their paths toward doctoral studies. McNair Scholars attend two years of weekly seminars designed to strengthen their skills in research writing, leadership and personal development. Mentored by a faculty member in their area of study, McNair scholars develop a research project for presentation at Eastern Michigan University and 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. Many participate in our student organization, the McNair Scholar Society, and all attend cultural and artistic events. Their work ethic is astounding, and their dedication to succeed is a source of continuing inspiration to those of us who have the pleasure of guiding them.

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 contribute to the success of our program, including Dr. Susan Martin, Dr. Kim Schatzel, Dr. Deb de Laski Smith, Dr. James Carroll, Dr. Rhonda Kinney-Longworth, Glenna Frank Miller, Dr. Mary Ramsey, Caryn Charter, Donelle Goerlitz,

Theda Davis-Henson, Dr. Sarah Huyvaert, Dr. Christine Neufeld, Justin Ford and Aquila Sams.

The EMU McNair Scholars Program could not succeed without the selfless dedication of Cynthia Rodrigues, our Assistant Director, Kimberly Freeman, our Program Specialist, and the extraordinary support of our graduate assistant, Ms. Shayna Rodriguez.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a first-generation physicist and astronaut. 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), who must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. The program prepares its participants for admission to and the successful completion of doctoral studies.

Once again, congratulations to the 2012 McNair Scholars!

Dr. Heather Neff
Director, Eastern Michigan University McNair Scholars Program
Professor of English
Michigan Distinguished Scholar

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The McNair Scholars Research Journal is a celebration of undergraduate scholarly achievement. We hope you enjoy exploring the research paths of the EMU McNair Scholars through the papers compiled within this volume.

Students in the program engage in rigorous research experiences under the mentorship of the faculty and guidance from the McNair staff, with leadership from Dr. Heather Neff. The program has been designed to prepare scholars for graduate education and successful long-term careers in a variety of program areas.

The McNair Scholars Program is a component of the Graduate School. We are honored to play a role in preparing future leaders, who will with time take their places as mentors, teachers, and co-researchers for other students who will benefit from their passion, commitment, and expertise.

These students are the pride of their families, their academic programs, their colleges, and EMU. We look forward to watching them blossom as they pursue their educational goals.

With pride, I give you the McNair Scholars Research Journal.

Dr. Deb de Laski-Smith
Director, Eastern Michigan University Graduate School