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## Directors' Comments

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## Directors' Comments

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D.

*Director, EMU McNair Scholars Program*

*Professor of English*

*Michigan Distinguished Scholar*

We are extremely proud of the papers published in this, the sixth volume of the *McNair Scholars Research Journal*. These papers present timely and important perspectives on a range of issues facing our nation and, indeed, our world. Topics in this volume include studies on the air quality surrounding our university campus; gastro-intestinal problems faced by children with Autism Spectrum Disorder; the effect of intimate partner violence on pre-school aged children, and an examination of online profiles of same-sex couples seeking to adopt. Such research speaks to the richness and depth of inquiry being carried out at Eastern Michigan University. We are extremely grateful to the faculty mentors who worked with our students.

McNair Scholars attend up to 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, these students develop a research project for presentation at Eastern Michigan University's Undergraduate Symposium. They carry out their research while taking a full load of classes and, in most cases, working. Each student 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. The majority of our students are members of EMU's Honors College and every McNair Scholar is committed to pursuing a doctoral degree.

The papers in this journal are also published electronically by Eastern Michigan University's Digital Commons, an international web portal available to global readers. To date, the 88 McNair papers published by EMU Digital Commons have been downloaded more than 40,000 times. The McNair Scholars Research Journal is, indeed, a "world-wide" publication.

I wish to extend my deepest thanks to the EMU administrators, faculty and staff who have contributed to the success of our program, including Dr. Susan Martin, Dr. Kim Schatzel, Dr. James Carroll, Dr. Jeffrey Kentor, Dr. Rhonda Kinney-Longworth, Dr. Mary Ramsey, Dr. Deb deLaski-Smith, Caryn Charter, Donelle Goerlitz, Theda Davis-Henson, Dr. Sarah Huyvaert, Cynthia Van Pelt, Dr. Rebecca Sipe, Glenna Frank Miller, Dr. Arnold Fleishmann, Dr. Christine Neufeld, Dr. Ellen Koch, Patrick Seick, Gregg Costanzo, Peggy Wiencek, John Benci, Dr. Linda Williams, Dr. Toni Stokes-Jones and Marcus Adams. We owe much of our success to your kindness and generosity. We are particularly grateful to Pamela McCombs, who served as the McNair Program Writing Specialist.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a 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 graduate programs and the successful completion of doctoral studies.

Congratulations to the 2013 McNair Scholars!

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D.

## Directors' Comments

Julia Nims, M.A., M.L.S.

*Editor and Curator of DigitalCommons@EMU*

*Head of the McNair Program Advisory Board*

I have had the privilege of being associated with the McNair Program at EMU since its establishment in 2007. Each year, I am amazed at the caliber of the research the McNair Scholars submit to the *McNair Scholars Research Journal*. This year is no exception. The carefully constructed questions and rigorous research displayed in the articles attest to the intellectual curiosity and talent of the authors. They should feel proud of their accomplishment.

I would like to extend my thanks to the members of the McNair Program Advisory Board and the faculty mentors. Their support and guidance are key to the success of the students and the McNair Program. I would also like to express my gratitude to the McNair Program Director, Dr. Heather Neff, Assistant Director Cynthia Rodrigues, and Program Specialist Kimberly Freeman. Their passion for the McNair Program and their dedication to the participants create a supportive and encouraging environment as the students experience both the challenges and satisfaction of becoming researchers.

The McNair Scholars published in this volume will be leaders in their respective disciplines. I wish them success as they continue their educational endeavors, and look forward to their future achievements.

Julia K. Nims