

## Directors' Comments

Heather Neff  
hneff@emich.edu

Jeffrey Kentor  
jkentor@emich.edu

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## Directors' Comments

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D.

*Director, EMU McNair Scholars Program*

*Professor of English*

*Michigan Distinguished Scholar*

Eastern Michigan University is one of 158 institutions of higher learning in the United States selected by the federal Department of Education to host a prestigious Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program. The EMU 'McNair Scholars Program' competitively admits 33 highly promising students during their sophomore and junior years of study, and offers them intensive advising, academic support, and research opportunities. All McNair Scholars are committed to pursuing Master's and Doctoral degrees.

McNair participants attend research seminars designed to strengthen their skills in academic writing, professional leadership, and personal development. Under the supervision of a faculty mentor in their respective disciplines, McNair Scholars develop research for presentation at Eastern Michigan University's Undergraduate Symposium, the McNair Research Colloquium, and at a national McNair conference.

The scholarly articles published in this journal represent a broad range of academic disciplines, important and innovative research, and illustrate the tireless generosity of the faculty who worked with our students: Ruth Ann Armitage, Yvette Colón, Natalie Dove, Steven Huprich, Toni Stokes Jones, Renee Lajiness-O'Neill, Pamela Landau, Philip Tartalone and Jeanne Thomas. Indeed, this seventh volume of the McNair Scholars Research Journal includes work on the use of Magnetoencephalography in assessing the brain activity of children with autism; the influence of early home life on the attitudes of women in the corporate environment; the impact of automation systems on pilots' decisions when flying in inclement weather, and the means of improving the retention and success of African American males at post-secondary educational institutions.

The McNair Scholars Research Journal is published electronically by Eastern Michigan University's Digital Commons. At present, our scholars' papers have been downloaded by readers more than 60,000 times. McNair Scholars are ambassadors of Eastern excellence throughout the world.

I wish to extend my deepest thanks to the 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. Mary Ramsey, Dr. Rebecca Sipe, Dr. Arnold Fleishmann, Dr. Ellen Koch, Dr. Deb de Laski-Smith, Dr. Mark Jackson, Thomas Venner, Dr. Kate Mehuron, Dr. Sarah Huyvaert, Keith Jason, Candace Dorsey, Caryn Charter, Donelle Goerlitz, Claresta Davis, Cynthia Van Pelt, Jennifer Janicek, Gregg Costanzo, Dr. Toni Stokes Jones and Marcus Adams. We owe much of our success to your continued kindness and generosity.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a physicist and astronaut. The EMU McNair Program annually serves 33 high-achieving sophomores, juniors and seniors from first-generation, low income or under-represented groups (African American, Native American, Hispanic or Alaskan Native / Pacific Islander). The program prepares its participants for admission to graduate programs, and the successful completion of doctoral studies.

Congratulations to the eight McNair Scholars published in this journal. We are very proud of you!

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D.

## Directors' Comments

Dr. Jeffrey Kentor, Ph.D.

*Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies And Research*

I hope you share my excitement and pride in reading this 7th volume of the McNair Scholars Research Journal. It is the culmination of ambitious research projects spanning a host of disciplines, and an impressive reflection of the exceptional efforts of these young scholars and their dedicated faculty mentors over the past two years.

The purpose of the McNair Scholars Program is to prepare our most promising undergraduates for graduate study, with an emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields. The program has an outstanding record of success, with our students going on to graduate work at distinguished institutions such as UCLA, University of Chicago, Columbia University, and the University of Michigan, among many other highly regarded institutions.

My sincere gratitude to the faculty mentors who guided and nurtured these nascent scholars through the research process. This volume would not be possible without their expertise and dedication. And my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Heather Neff and her staff for their tireless commitment to these students throughout their McNair experience.

Please join me in congratulating our McNair scholars on their outstanding achievements, and wishing them all the best in their future academic pursuits!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeffrey Kentor, Ph.D.