

# McNair Scholars Smart News

March 2014 Newsletter



## McNair Staff

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D. - Director  
[hneff@emich.edu](mailto:hneff@emich.edu)

Kimberly Freeman - Program Specialist  
[kbrown4@emich.edu](mailto:kbrown4@emich.edu)

Adam Natoli - Graduate Assistant  
[anatoli@emich.edu](mailto:anatoli@emich.edu)

Tiffany Browne - Smart News Writer  
[tbrowne@emich.edu](mailto:tbrowne@emich.edu)



## McNair Program Contact Information

Eastern Michigan University  
Wise Hall, 1st Floor  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
734-487-8240  
E-mail:  
[emu.mcnair@emich.edu](mailto:emu.mcnair@emich.edu)

## Announcements, Events and Reminders

- ◆ First Generation Graduate Student Panel Discussion March 10<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ 2014 EMU Undergraduate Research Symposium March 28<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Cultural Event: EMU production *To Kill a Mockingbird* April 5<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ McNair Scholars Program Graduation Ceremony April 14<sup>th</sup>

Like us on Facebook: EMU McNair Scholars Program  
Join us on Facebook: EMU McNair Scholars Group  
Follow us on Twitter: @EMUMcNair

## Cracking the Fractal: Life of a Scholar Athlete

Balance is the key to success for any college student. If you add the pressures of rigorous academic coursework, three seasons of competitive athletics and seventy to eighty miles of running per week, you'll be describing the life of the McNair Scholar and Honors College member **William Trice III**. Some may wonder how it's possible for a sophomore to succeed while taking sixteen credit hours of upper-level Math and Physics courses; William feels that the support that he receives from his EMU communities has helped him to be as successful academically, as he is on the track.

William is currently working with **Dr. Ernest Behringer**, Professor of Physics, on a project called "An Examination of the Scattering of Light within a Pyramid of Four Spherical Reflecting Mirrors."

The principal goal of the project is to analyze the fractal patterns and colors of light

that appear after shining three different color sources into a pyramid of spherical mirrors. The data will be analyzed in order to assess how different colors of light behave in different situations. Though the project is still in its early stages, William is already looking forward to analyzing the numerical data he hopes to collect from his lab — always remembering that he is a scholar, first, and an athlete, second!

"I look at my life as two sides of the same coin. When I'm on the track, I think of myself as an athlete. When I'm in the classroom, I think of myself as a scholar," William stated, when describing his concept of "balance." "I couldn't see my life without either aspect [advanced academics or athletics]; they've both been a part of my life for so long that now it's normal." On the athletic side, a typical week for this busy scholar includes runs anywhere from the perimeter of campus to North Bay Park, or even just around our indoor track at the REC/IM. William stated that the moment of clarity that comes after a long run can be of real benefit to his life as a scholar.

William's scholarly life always includes many hours of focused studying and class preparation, skills that allow him to maximize his use of time. He was first drawn to Physics while taking a high school architecture course, and he has always enjoyed Mathematics. William was an All-State Track Star in two events while living in Grand Rapids, his home. He plans to earn his Doctoral degree, then open his own research laboratory and teach.

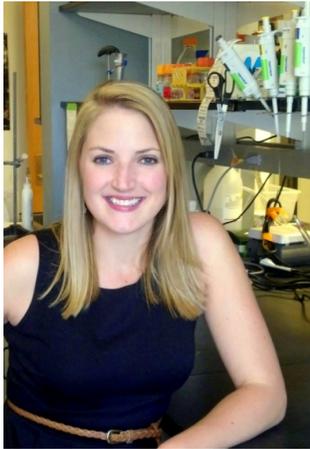
William continues to run because he enjoys the self-discipline and structure it adds to his life. Congratulations to William for taking on so many challenges — and winning!



Photo courtesy of Adam Karr and the Eastern Echo.

## Critically Close to Success

### Ph.D. Dreams Become a Reality



“I find myself at a critical period in my studies, where things could go very well or pretty badly. I’m *so* close to success!” After five and a half years of doctoral studies, EMU graduate **Ashley Rowland** (‘09) will soon complete her **Ph.D. in Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology** at the **University of Colorado, Boulder**. It has taken many years and countless hours of studying, lab work and research, but Ashley’s hard work will soon pay off.

Working in a lab is a full-time job. Ashley’s research focuses on basic cell biology and seeks to understand how cell organelles coordinate their functions. Typically, Ashley works daily from nine to five in her lab, and occasionally takes her work home at night. Ashley has completed most of the coursework required for her program. Her first two years at the University of Colorado were spent mastering highly advanced research techniques and serving as a Teaching Assistant. After passing her comprehensive exams and successfully defending her research to questions by a panel of

Biology faculty, Ashley turned her full attention toward her dissertation. Good time management and personal dedication have allowed her to stay on track, while making the most of her graduate school experience. Ashley also feels that her previous academic training increased her confidence.

When asked what she identifies as the most important component in her success, Ashley answered: “Selecting good mentors is the most important skill you can develop; what sets people apart is the support of their mentors.” Ashley feels that connections with mentors, such as her EMU mentor, **Dr. Robert Winning**, are essential to doctoral and post-doctoral studies, because mentors provide networking opportunities and critically important academic and personal support. Ashley hopes her research will be published in the journal *Nature Reviews: Molecular Cell Biology* in the fall of this year. Ashley plans to graduate this December. After graduating, she intends to continue her life in academia as a professor and researcher.

Congratulations to Ashley Rowland, who is well on her way to becoming EMU McNair’s first Doctor of Philosophy!

## 2014 EMU Undergraduate Symposium

EMU McNair is proud to announce that **eighteen** scholars, a record number for the McNair Program, will present research at this year’s Undergraduate Symposium. Stop by the EMU Student Center on March 28th and enjoy their excellent work! Congratulations scholars!

**Shahana Ahmed**  
**Kryn Ambs**  
**Jasmyn Barringer**  
**Brandon Britt**  
**Tiffany Browne**  
**Troy Deskins**  
**Carly Evich**  
**Timothy Harrison**  
**Christopher Haskin**

**Charae London-Terry**  
**Rosalyn Maldonado**  
**Tanjare McKay**  
**Marcia Molett**  
**Mayra Rivas**  
**Jazmin Rodgers**  
**Sylvia Torres**  
**TyRonda Smith**  
**Nathaneil Winston**

## HOORAY, McNair Scholars!

### Graduate School Admissions:

**Julie Krupa, ’12: Doctoral Programs** in Criminal Justice at Michigan State, Indiana University, the University of San Francisco, Central Florida University and Sam Houston State University;

**Marcia Molett:** Urban Education M.A. at the University of Maryland, College Park;

**Charae London-Terry:** Master’s of Social Work programs at Syracuse University and Columbia;

**Mayra Rivas:** University of Michigan's Master's in Public Health Program.

### Summer Research Opportunity Programs:

**Jazmin Rodgers:** University of North Carolina, Charlotte (May) and the University of Chicago (July – August);

**Brandon Britt:** the Ohio State University;

**Shahana Ahmed** and **Mikki Smith:** the University of Michigan.