

Eastern Michigan University McNair Challenger

April edition, 2019



EMU McNair Staff

Dr. Heather Neff, Ph.D.

Director

hneff@emich.edu

Kimberly Brown, M.A.

Assistant Director

Kbrown4@emich.edu

Amanda Wardin, B.S.

Graduate Assistant

awardin@emich.edu

McNair Program

1011 Hoyt Hall

Ypsilanti, MI 48197

(734) 487-8240

emich.edu/mcnair

Events:

MAC Award Ceremony:

McKenny Hall, 330

April 5, Noon-2:00 p.m.

Last Day of Classes:

April 18

Final Exams:

April 22-26

Research deadline

(Interns): April 5

GRE course (Interns):

May 13 - June 17, Mon. &

Thurs., 9am to 12 noon

Ohio State visit

(Interns): June 23-24

Summer Conference and Graduate School

Visit: Dates TBA

We ARE the Future: Interviews with our 2019 Graduates!



Victoria Fields, Communication and Sport Management, *Summa cum Laude*
Dr. Dennis O'Grady, Mentor
"The Rhetorical Discourse Surrounding Female Intersex Athletes"

I began my academic journey at Eastern Michigan University in 2015, double majoring in Communication and Sport Management. In my sophomore year, I realized my gift and love for research. I then combined both of my academic majors to conduct research on race/gender, mass media, and sports!

Joining the Honors College and the EMU McNair Scholars program changed my life. As a result, I've presented at the EMU Undergraduate Symposium multiple times, presented at national conferences and published a research paper. I am incredibly grateful for the growth that has occurred during these last four years!

McNair has been extremely influential in my life! Through this program I learned how to conduct research, write proposals, and present my research effectively. I have also met lifelong friends and colleagues. Additionally, due to the support and guidance from Dr. Neff and Kimberly Brown, I have accomplished many personal and educational goals. They have helped shape me into the scholar I am today, and aided me with gaining the tools to be successful in my future graduate programs.

I was very fortunate to work with a mentor, Dr. Dennis O'Grady, who kept my best interests at heart and who strongly supports my educational goals. The greatest benefit was how his support guided me to the next level as a scholar and researcher. Dr. O'Grady's guidance has helped me become more confident in my research and teaching abilities.

I will be attending the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign this fall in pursuit of my Master's degree in Communication. I have been offered full funding, a Graduate Teaching Assistantship and an ASPIRE Research Fellowship. I plan to pursue my Ph.D. and become a professor!

Rasheed Atwater, B.A. '16, History, M.A. '19, History and African American Studies

Dr. Ana Monteiro-Ferreira, Mentor

I began my undergraduate studies as a walk-on athlete majoring in Exercise Science. After being cut from the track team and falling in love with African-American studies I transformed into a scholar and was able to conduct research at a number of conferences and to travel around the world (*continued below*).



McNair was my introduction into the idea of graduate studies. Before McNair I didn't know what an M.A. or Ph.D. were and now, because of the training and support garnished during my time with McNair, I'm finishing my Master of Arts in History and beginning my doctoral studies in African American Studies at Temple University.

My mentor, the late Dr. Ana Monteiro-Ferreira became an academic mother to me. She introduced me to my academic idol, mentored my first publication, allowed me to substitute teach for her, and gave me life-changing advice and guidance. Dr. Ana believed in me so much that I started to believe in myself. Her compassion and care pushed me throughout my academic career and inspired my master's culminating project. Having the honor to be Dr. Ana's student and mentee was one of the greatest joys of my life.

I plan to attend Temple University and earn my Ph.D. in Africology and African-American studies with a research focus on the use of Afrocentric theory and traditional African values for social development in agriculture and education.

I advise everyone to do what you love! Remember why you're here! Know that you are your ancestors' greatest dream!

Ashley Beals, Public Health, *Magna cum Laude*

Dr. Jeffrey Schulz, Mentor

“The Role of Prescription Trends in the Opioid Epidemic and the Factors That Affect Physician Prescriptions”

When I began EMU my goal was to take classes and get a degree as fast as possible. Once I found a field I was passionate about, made great connections with faculty, and began the McNair program, I started focusing on gaining opportunities and experience. I decided to extend my graduation for a year, and was able to conduct great research, attend and present at many conferences, get involved in organizations, participate in a University of Michigan Summer Research Opportunity Program, and make myself a more competitive applicant for schools, jobs, and internships.



McNair has pushed me to try things I would have never tried otherwise. I would not have applied for the Future Public Health Leaders Program at the University of Michigan if it weren't for the encouragement of other scholars McNair who shared their SROP experiences. I wouldn't have gained the research writing and presentation experience that made me a competitive applicant when applying for graduate programs. And then there's my publication in the *McNair Scholars Research Journal*...!

The greatest benefit was connecting with someone who I could go to whenever I had a question about our program, graduate school, needed a letter of recommendation, or just to talk. My mentor has genuinely cared about my accomplishments at Eastern and within McNair. Now he loves the program and recommends it to other students.

Right now I am still considering my graduate school options. I was admitted to six very competitive programs, so I'm comparing the funding, cost of living, and opportunities for mentoring in each program. I will make a decision by next week and begin classes in the fall (*continued below*).

I advise all McNair Scholars to make great connections in McNair, apply for summer opportunities, and build a strong relationship with people in McNair and your mentor. The strong connections gave me the support system I needed. And NEVER lose your drive to succeed!



Larry Borum III, B.S., December 2018, Physics

Dr. Marshall Thomsen, Mentor

“Study of Microclimate Temperature Distribution in an Artificial Structure”

I've been at EMU for 5 and half years, and I've experienced a great deal of academic growth and personal development. Although I remained in the same department throughout my studies, my career goal has moved from Astrophysics to Renewable Energy and Energy Policy.

McNair has influenced my life in many ways, but I think one of the most important is the opportunity to travel and explore areas different from my own. McNair has really deepened my perspective on the future of higher education, and specifically the challenges faced by low SES students and students of color in communities all over the U.S.

I really appreciated my mentor's flexibility and willingness to help me out whenever I had questions. Dr. Thomsen and I developed an effective work-support balance in which I could work independently but still reach out for support when needed.

As of right now I have applied to 9 graduate schools and so far have been accepted to 6! I am still waiting to hear from three other schools (two in Massachusetts, and one in Washington State). I plan to start graduate school in the Fall of this year.

I'd like to encourage my fellow Scholars to: One, don't be afraid to be out of your comfort zone! To really stand out you need to be comfortable with being uncomfortable! Two, grades and test scores only carry so much weight. What really matters what you do outside of the classroom, such as student orgs, volunteering, etc.

Robert Green-Warren, Mechanical Engineering

Dr. MacArthur Stewart, Mentor

“An Experimental Investigation of Torque Loss in a Die Cast Aluminum Threaded Fastener Joint”

I am grateful to have called EMU my undergraduate home. The smaller classes in my program served as a gateway to connecting with faculty, classmates, and fellow on-campus residents to develop lifelong relationships. I remember coming to EMU as a young student with dreams and aspirations, but I completely lacked the discipline and direction to follow them. Over the years, I ran across many individuals who challenged my thoughts and dreams and encouraged me to pursue graduate studies in mechanical engineering. After declaring a minor in Mathematics I felt as though I had the background to further develop the theories I learned in my courses. I surrounded myself with individuals who sharpened my focus and pushed me to be more, and I'm indebted to so many for encouraging me throughout my undergraduate experience. On April 28th I will be beyond proud to call EMU my alma mater (*continued below*).



It's difficult to imagine what my life would look like without the assistance of the impeccable EMU McNair Scholars Program. Dr. Neff and Kimberly have been instrumental in giving me the foundation to dive deep into research, ask questions that have yet to be asked, and to push myself to be the best scholar I can be. McNair laid the groundwork of my plans to pursue a PhD in Mechanical Engineering. I was going to seek a Master's degree and work before going to get my PhD., but my McNair research led to my first publication, a priority admission into an REU, and ultimately my acceptance directly into the doctoral program in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Rutgers University. McNair constantly reminded me that the Bachelor's degree was only the beginning, and I thank all of the faculty, staff, mentors, and of course the students, for pushing me and providing an opportunity for a young man like myself to fulfill the McNair promise. *Thank you!*

My mentor, Dr. M. Lamar Stewart, P.E., was individually the most influential person I've met since coming to Eastern Michigan University. From the time I met Dr. Stewart he encouraged me to declare a math minor to help with the mathematical rigor associated with our field, contracted my first honors course, and encouraged me to pursue a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering. He has guided me not only in research, but in life as a scholar and a man. His work alone served as the basis for the new Mechanical Engineering program. I am proud to be a part of its first graduating class. *Thank you, Dr. Stewart,* for seeing in me what I at times did not see in myself. Thank you for believing in me and my vision. I hope you are proud.

I will begin my graduate studies as a Ph.D. student at Rutgers University in Fall 2019.

I'd tell all of my fellow McNair Scholars that when you feel like you've finished, press on. This mentality will always keep you at the forefront of your field and expose you to elements of research that are bound to inspire you. Don't be afraid to push your limits and be willing to do what others won't. Ultimately, no matter where you end up, never forget who you are. For me this meant adding a bit of myself to everything I put my name on as a means of making it unique and distinct. You are excellent and you deserve to be here, and you should never lose sight of that. McNair and your mentor will be there to help when you fall down, so don't lose hope and keep the goal in sight.



Courtni Montgomery, B.S. December, 2018, Psychology

Dr. Karen Saules, Mentor

“Cognitive Functioning Outcomes after Binge Drinking and Cigarette Smoking Among a National Sample of U.S. Older Adults”

Through McNair I have become more confident in my academic abilities, and also aware of what field I want to pursue. Before coming to EMU or joining McNair and the Honors College, I spent a lot of time questioning myself. My time at Eastern has cemented my drive to pursue Public Health and succeed in higher education.

McNair has enabled me to learn how to properly collaborate with faculty, and has made me a more confident public speaker.

Working with my mentor has helped me gain skills in research, learn how to communicate, and given me a chance to build valuable relationships.

I plan on completing a Master's in Public Health with a concentration in Health Behavior & Health Promotion.

I encourage my fellow McNair Scholars to always take time for yourself and stay motivated!

CONGRATULATIONS, WONDERFUL SCHOLARS!!!

2019 Graduate School Admissions

Mahogany Anderson, (B.A., December 2018) *Psychology*, Dr. Charles Graham, Mentor
Case Western Reserve University's Mandel School of Social Work, Master of Social Work Program

Rasheed Atwater (B.A. 2016, M.A., 2019) *History and Africology*, Dr. Anna Ferreira, Mentor
Temple University, Doctoral Program in Africology and African American Studies

Ashley Beals, *Public Health*, Dr. Jeffrey Guthrie, Mentor (selected program underlined)

- *Magna Cum Laude, Honors College, "Outstanding Undergraduate Major of the Year," NEHC*

Emory University, Master of Public Health in Behavioral Sciences & Health Education
The Ohio State University, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior & Health Promotion
University of Michigan, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior and Health Education
University of Michigan, Master of Health Informatics, Public Health
The University of Toledo, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior & Health Promotion

Larry Borum (B.S., December 2018) *Physics*, Dr. John Thomsen, Mentor (selected program underlined)
Arizona State University, Master of Environmental, Civil and Sustainable Engineering
Kansas State University, Master of Mechanical Engineering, or...
The Ohio State University, Public Policy and Management, Master of Public Administration
Oregon Institute of Technology, Master of Science in Renewable Energy Engineering
University of Michigan, M.S. in Environment & Sustainability/Policy and Planning
University of Washington, Master of Public Administration, Evans School of Public Policy & Governance
Wayne State University, Master of Science in Alternative Energy Tech, College of Engineering

Brandon Britt, Education (B.A., 2015, M.A. Ohio State University, 2017), Dr. Toni Stokes Jones, Mentor
The Ohio State University, Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

Victoria Fields, *Sport Management*, Dr. Dennis O'Grady

- *Summa Cum Laude, Honors College, McNair Scholar of the Year*

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Master of Communications Program, ASPIRE Fellowship

Robert Green, *Mechanical Engineering*, Dr. MacArthur Stewart, Mentor (selected program underlined)
Rutgers University, Doctoral Program in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
University of Florida, Master of Mechanical Engineering, Herbert Wertheim Achievement Scholarship

Courtnei Montgomery, *Psychology*, Dr. Karen Saules, Mentor (selected program underlined)

- *B.A., December 2018, Magna Cum Laude, EMU Honors College*

Emory University, Master of Public Health in Behavioral Sciences & Health Education
The Ohio State University, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior & Health Promotion
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Master of Public Health, Department of Community Health
University of Michigan, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior and Health Education

Kimberly Solomon, *Psychology*, Dr. Angela Staples, Mentor

- *B.A., December 2018,*

Eastern Michigan University, Master of Clinical Psychology

Karess Taylor, *Psychology*, Dr. Chong Man Chow, Mentor (selected program underlined)

- *EMU Honors College*

The Ohio State University, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior & Health Promotion
University of Michigan, Master of Public Health in Health Behavior and Health Education
University of Texas, Houston, Master of Public Health Program
Wayne State University, Family Medicine Master of Public Health Science Program