Welcome Back Issue!

Hello everyone!

WE’VE MOVED to the 10th floor “penthouse” suite of Hoyt Hall! Please come up, chat with the staff—Dr. Neff, Kimberly, Alex and Thomas, Shahana, Rosaly and Mariah — and enjoy the spectacular view! McNair participants are welcome to relax in the lounge, use the computers in the study area, or grab a quick coffee (thank you, Thomas!).

With the start of the 2015-2016 academic year, it’s time for the EMU McNair Scholars to start up their exciting calendar of activities and engage in a new year of research. This issue highlights some of the many amazing activities our scholars did this summer, and the publication of our scholars’ research in Vol. 8 of the McNair Scholars Research Journal. We’re looking forward to seeing all of the exciting work our McNair Scholars will accomplish in 2015-2016!

Congratulations to Brialle Ringer,
Student Leadership in Diversity Scholarship Winner

By Dr. Heather Neff

Congratulations to senior McNair Scholar Brialle Ringer, who has been selected to receive the Student Leadership in Diversity Scholarship from the Michigan chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. In the words of the award selection committee: “Your leadership, ambition, academic success, and celebration of diversity on all levels made you an exemplary candidate for this award. NASW-Michigan commends your community involvement and commitment to education, as well as your leadership and research on issues of student homelessness and health issues amongst African-American women. NASW-Michigan looks forward to learning from you and your experiences in the years ahead.”

Brialle will receive her award at the Legislative Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) on Wednesday, November 11, 2015 in Lansing. She has also been invited to be a part of the Ulink Advocacy program, which connects student leaders from all social work programs in Michigan to determine the needs of future social workers. Brialle was published both in Volumes 7 and 8 of the McNair Scholars Research Journal. Her 2015 paper, “College Students Experiencing Homelessness: The Consequence of Failed Macro Policies,” focuses on the challenges created by the high cost of higher education. Brialle is also a site coordinator for the EMU Vision office and recently returned from a support program in Haiti. Brialle’s mentors are Dr. Pamela Landau (2013-2014) and Dr. Marti Bombyk (2014-2016).
We are very proud of Brialle!
EMU McNair Challenger

Eye Opener  By Shahana Ahmed

Like so many others coming to college as a freshman, I was scared. Petrified and doubt-ridden. It was the first time I’d escaped the bubble I’d lived in for the past 17 years. Even before graduating from high school, my life seemed to be all mapped out and cookie cutter perfect. I never dreamed of all the possibilities in higher education and science that exist for a young woman in my position. I didn’t realize the power of my passion to learn. And when I was admitted to the McNair Scholars Program, I never imagined I’d soon be pursuing my Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology. All of that changed when I met my mentor, Dr. Anne Casper.

Originally from Nebraska (Go Big Red!), Dr. Casper lives with her husband and two daughters, Leah (3 yrs.) and Glory (3 months) in Ann Arbor, MI. Dr. Casper earned her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in the Department of Human Genetics, and her post-doctoral training through the Seeding Postdoctoral Innovators in Research and Education (SPIRE) program at UNC-Chapel Hill. She gained further training in both research and teaching through SPIRE, and worked at both Duke University and Shaw University before being tenured at Eastern Michigan University.

Dr. Casper has been instrumental to my success here at Eastern. Thank you, Dr. Casper!

Find a mentor who inspires you, and then keep pressing toward your goals!

Dirty Dancing
October 21st, 2015, 8:00 p.m.
EMU excursion
Fisher Theater
Detroit, MI

Little Shop of Horrors
October 24th, 2015, 7:00 p.m.
EMU Theater
EMU Quirk
Ypsilanti, MI

“Vocal Arts Performance”
November 13th, 2015, 8:00 p.m.
EMU Music
Pease Auditorium
Ypsilanti, MI

Ballet
December 4th, 2015, 8:00 p.m.
EMU Dance
Pease Auditorium
Ypsilanti, MI

HOLIDAY PARTY POTLUCK
December 12th, 2015 11:00am
EMU McNair
Hoyt Hall
Ypsilanti, MI
Empowering Communities, by Brandie Bentley

I had the amazing opportunity to participate in the Future Public Health Leaders Program (FPHLP) at the U of M School of Public Health this summer. For my field placement, I interned at the Black Mothers’ Breastfeeding Association (BMBFA), an organization that works to reduce the racial inequalities in breastfeeding support for African Americans, and to ultimately lower the disparities present in infant mortality rates amongst African American babies. During my time in the program, I was able to gain knowledge from top Public Health Professionals who are working for social change. Through having a cohort of peers from all over the nation, I was able to connect with other underrepresented individuals who shared a similar vision of creating healthier communities and advocating for the rights of our people. I observed, firsthand, how Public Health impacts everything. One of the most memorable moments for me was administering a community survey in my very own neighborhood. It was an empowering and worthwhile experience to speak to people I actually knew about our love for our neighborhood, and also what needed to be done to improve our community. My experience in FPHLP was absolutely priceless. Everything, from the knowledge and new skills I acquired, the meaningful friendships I created, and the once-in-a-lifetime networking opportunities that were presented, helped to promote my personal growth and shape me into a better future professional.

Revitalizing and Inspiring, by Allante Moon

This summer, I was accepted into the University of Michigan’s Future Public Health Leaders Internship. It was a wonderful experience! I was placed at Joy-Southfield Community Development Corporation, where I was responsible for picking and preparing fruits and vegetables for the Dixon Educational Leadership Academy. I focused on neighborhood revitalization by providing accessible fruits and vegetable for the community through the Sowing Seeds Growing Futures Farmers Market. I also served as a leader for the Healthy Empowered Youth (HEY) Detroit program. The highlight of my FPHLP experience was the trip to Atlanta, Georgia for the tour of the Centers for Disease Control. This was my first time flying to another state, and I was overwhelmed by how welcoming I was. I am so blessed to have experienced this wonderful internship and I want to thank the Director, the wonderful FPHLP team, my EMU mentor, Dr. Janet Okagbue-Reaves, and the McNair staff! I’m looking forward to continuing research on the problems the elderly face in obtaining affordable medications.

Introducing the EMU McNair Scholars Research Journal, Vol. 8

By Thomas Passwater

The EMU McNair Scholars nine scholars’ original research in Volume 8 of the EMU McNair Scholars Research Journal. The journal includes original research a wide range of academic fields. Our proud scholars this year are: