A Chemistry Conference with Chasity Love

In April, I attended the American Chemical Society conference in New Orleans. Attending this conference was an excellent experience for me because this conference was not just statewide; thousands of people from around the world were attending. I was excited to be in New Orleans and able to present at a conference that is so well known in my field. All I could think about is how many undergraduates would love to be in my shoes. If someone told me a couple of years ago that I would be attending an ACS conference in New Orleans, I would have thought they were joking. Even though I attended a couple of conferences before this one, nothing compared to this because this was the conference that everyone hopes to present at and attend one day.

While attending the conference, I presented a poster based on my research study: “DFT Studies of Small Copper Clusters.” I got a lot of feedback on my research from professors from all over the world and a lot of suggestions on what I should do next. While in New Orleans, I attended a banquet ceremony to receive the $500 travel award I was awarded from the National Science Foundation. I also got the opportunity to attend presentations that were given by well known chemists and meet some of the faculty members of colleges that I am considering attending when I choose a PhD program.

After watching oral and poster presentations, I got a chance to explore some parts of the city. I visited areas that were affected by Hurricane Katrina, as well as downtown tourist areas.

Chasity Love
2007-08 Scholar

From the Director

As you can see, we have put together the first McNair Scholars’ newsletter of the year. We are truly excited about keeping you informed on everything our Scholars are doing. Our Scholars are genuinely involved in their research and it is our hope that this newsletter will convey their passion as well as their dedication to achieving their educational goals. I hope you enjoy reading about our amazing Scholars and all of their accomplishments!

Dr. Julia Spears
2008 Summer Scholars

Raquel Brown
Biological Sciences
Mentor: James MacLean
Research Project: “Rhox Gene Expression During the Ovarian Cycle”

Conisha Brownlee
Food and Nutrition
Mentor: Sharon Peterson
Research Project: “Assessment of College Students’ Food Choices when Comparing their Home Choices to the College Campus Choices”

Chasity Love
Chemistry
Mentor: Lichang Wang

Levell Mables
Marketing
Mentor: Suzanne Nasco
Research Project: “Examining Consumer Perceptions of Saluki Athletics”

C. Grant Cox, III
Art - Painting
Mentor: Najjar Abdul-Musawwir
Research Project: “Recycled - Repurposed - Revalued”

Monica Mason
Journalism - News Editorial
Mentor: Novotny Lawrence
Research Project: “Narrow Casting or Narrowly Casting?: A Qualitative Analysis of Marketing Strategies Used on a Popular Social Networking Website Facebook”

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Research Project: “Narrow Casting or Narrowly Casting?: A Qualitative Analysis of Marketing Strategies Used on a Popular Social Networking Website Facebook”

Jonaté Govan
Health Education
Mentor: Mark Kittleson
Research Project: “Understanding Binge Drinking Among Football Players at a Midwestern 1AA”

Sarah Owusu
Physiology
Mentor: Buffy Ellsworth
Research Project: “Expression of the Foxd1 Gene in Pituitary During Embryonic Development”

Jennie Irwin
Rehabilitation Services
Mentor: D. Shane Koch

Aléc Perry
Communication Disorders and Sciences
Mentor: Shawna Pope
Research Project: “Assessment of Cross-Cultural Adaptability of Graduate Students in Communication Disorders and Sciences”

Mickey Johnson
History
Mentor: Ras Michael Brown

Kandace Vallejo
History
Mentor: Kathy Hytten
Research Project: “Perceptions and Reflections of Democracy: A Qualitative Study”

Vernon Johnson
Healthcare Management
Mentor: Mark Kittleson
Research Project: “Communication Breakdown: A Critical Assessment of Type 2 Diabetes Education Efforts Directed Towards African-American Students at a Midwestern University”

Stacie Wallace
Psychology
Mentor: Rebecca Weston
Research Project: “Perceptual Play: An Investigation of the Perception and Motive of Playful Aggression in Intimate Heterosexual Relationships”
Though Julia and Rhetta are angels, McNair is not God, they are not blessing you

They are here to rescue you from the land of the destitute to plans you are destined to

And if these five steps you follow through, Dr. (Who)? Is how they will be addressing you.

Step 1: What to study?
You can be a philosopher who sifts queries and quandaries
You can check how the earth in a fault zone lifts after tsunamis
You can study how the a war in Iraq flips war to Iranis
Or how poverty is passed on through bad shifts for poor mommies

Step 2: The Summer Institute
As a researcher, this is the time for you to find you
Take pictures in your mind that this cohort binds you
But, let this short time always remind you
That you are never alone there’s always someone behind you

Step 3: GRE
Perhaps, nothing instills more fear than a standardized test
I know how you feel; it’s natural to be stressed
Don’t worry, through McNair’s help, you’re going to do your best
But the night before that anxious day be sure to get some rest

Step 4: Grad School Apps
Remember applying to McNair?
Application, Personal statements, transcripts, taxes, recommendations
It’s pretty much the same situation,
Multiply that six times and wait in anticipation

Step 5: Cross those T’s and Dot that I
The main event, accepted to five schools
Full fellowships but be careful of time rules
I know this is a lot and by now your mind’s full
But take these tools with you; they are more precious than fine jewels
Every summer for the past four years, the McNair Scholars Program’s offices erupt in a flurry of activity in preparation for the Summer Research Institute (SRI). This year, with fourteen scholars and fourteen different research projects, it’s no different. The research projects to be presented at this year’s Annual McNair Scholars Research Symposium will come from eight colleges including the College of Science, Agricultural Sciences, Education and Human Services, Liberal Arts, Allied Health, Business, and Mass Communication and Media Arts. Along with preparing for their presentations and possible publication of their research, scholars are required to attend six weeks of GRE Preparation training. Although the SRI requires a strenuous effort from each individual, each scholar works side by side with their faculty mentors, graduate assistants, and program directors.

Aside from the research and GRE Prep training, the McNair Scholars Program does its best to facilitate a fun and relaxing environment. This year’s activities included the High Ropes Course at Touch of Nature and a scavenger hunt conducted here on the SIU campus. Every activity, while geared towards providing a fun break, also works to draw the scholars together as a cohort. As Jonaté Govan, a McNair scholar and SIU football player, points out, “I think it’s a good opportunity for teambuilding. I feel like I’m part of a team, and that’s great.”

In just a few months, many of you will begin preparing graduate school applications or writing graduate-level papers for the first time. Here is a list of things to consider as you begin those writing projects:

1. Always Keep your Intended Audience in Mind
   - Who will be reading your application/paper? What expectations do they have?
2. Consider your Intended Purpose
   - Does your paper or personal statement convey your purpose?
3. Proofread! Proofread!
   - Have your faculty mentor or someone in the writing center take a look at your paper or personal statement.
The REACH Award is a one-year award available on a competitive basis to undergraduates conducting research, scholarly, or creative projects under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Awards include a grant of up to $1,500 to pay for expenses and a 10-hour undergraduate assistantship for fall and spring.

### 2008 McNair Graduates

- **Andrea Arnieri**: Accepted the position of Leadership Consultant for her international fraternity, Alpha Gamma Delta.
- **Vanessa Enriquez**: Will attend Colorado State University to pursue a Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology where she has been awarded a Bridge to the Doctorate Fellowship.
- **Donald Hughes**: Will attend the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to pursue a M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning where he has been awarded a McNair Graduate Fellowship.
- **Michael-Ann Johnson**: Will attend Southern Illinois University Carbondale to pursue a M.A. in History.
- **Krystelle Jean-Michel**: Will attend Western Michigan University to pursue a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology.
- **Krishna Pattisapu**: Will attend Southern Illinois University Carbondale to pursue a M.A. in Speech Communication.
- **Naketa Ross**: Will attend the University of Arizona to pursue a M.A. in Public Administration.
- **Karen Stone**: Will attend the Rehabilitation Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale where she will pursue a M.S. in Behavioral Analysis and Therapy.
- **Karie Stewart**: Has applied to the Master’s in Biological Science Program at the University of Illinois Chicago and Chicago State university. She has also applied to the Master’s in Public Health Program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

### 2008 REACH Award Winners

- **Jennie Irwin** received $1500 to work with her mentor Dr. Shane Koch from the Rehabilitation Institute on her research, entitled "Enhancing Treatment Outcomes for Methamphetamine Abusers Utilizing Contingency Management Techniques."
- **Chasity Love**, a McNair Scholar from the Chemistry Department received $1475 to work on her research, a "Study of the Adsorption of Small Copper Clusters on the Surface of Zinc Oxide" with her faculty mentor Lichang Wang from Chemistry.
- **Elizabeth Patterson**, working with her mentor Buffy Ellsworth from the Physiology Department, received $1449 for her research in Biological Sciences: "Discovering the Role of Forkhead Transcription Factor Foxj1 and its Role in Pituitary Development and Maintenance."
- **Stacie Wallace**, a McNair Scholar in Psychology, received $1500 for her research "'We Were Only Playing': An Exploration of Playful Aggression and Gender and Its Impact on the Initiation of Aggression" to be conducted under her faculty mentor Rebecca Weston from the Psychology Department.

**From left to right**: Karie Stewart, Vanessa Enriquez, Naketa Ross, Donald Hughes, Mickey Johnson, and Krishna Pattisapu

**From left to right**: Chasity Love, Stacie Wallace, Jennie Irwin, Elizabeth Patterson

**2008 McNair Graduates**
Reflections of a McNair Scholar

By: Krishna Pattisapu

In the past two years, my journey as a McNair Scholar has been one of realizations, triumphs, transitions, and choices. As a member of the program, I have come to understand the issues that students from underrepresented backgrounds face in their daily academic lives. I have grown to appreciate deeply the value of the alliances that form between students as we navigate the obstacles that stand before us. Along the way, I have enjoyed small triumphs that reinforce my confidence in the possibility of bringing my visions to life. I have struggled through transitions that have threatened my sense of security and forced me to rethink the paths I follow. And I have been faced with difficult decisions that without the undying support of my McNair Scholars family, I may not have had the courage to make it.

But all of this almost didn’t happen.

I learned of the McNair Scholars Program as a junior. I met with Julia early in the semester to discuss possibilities for involvement with the program. I was instantly excited about the opportunity to join a program that promotes diversity and the advancement of underrepresented students into graduate education. I received the application packet and took it home (with good intentions to return it). But, in what has always been my self-defeatist mode of thinking, I allowed what I knew would be a wonderful opportunity to sink further and further into the stack of papers on my desk. By November, I assumed I had ruined my chances of acceptance altogether until one morning, in line at Starbucks, Julia confronted me and encouraged me to complete my application. That small gesture set into motion what has become one of the most important and valuable experiences of my life.

Being a McNair Scholar has challenged me in almost every capacity. Where I was weak, I grew strong, and where I was strong, I grew stronger. Of course, there have been times throughout the process when I felt overwhelming self-doubt begin to creep up on me again, but my McNair Scholars family has helped me to chase it away. In my fellow Scholars, I have found both beautiful diversity and reflections of myself. There is a sense of comfort in knowing each of us, in our own right, has overcome obstacles that hinder our paths to personal success. My fellow scholars are some of the most intelligent, creative, and driven people I have ever met. They are counselors, comics, superheroes, mothers, role models, survivors, and friends. My life would not be as rich without each and every one of them. Each of us has a brilliant future and I hope that later in life, we can look back and realize that we served as stepping stones for one another along the way.

Our advisers are two of the most compassionate, supportive, and strong-willed women I have ever known. I am in constant awe of the love they have for each and every one of their students. Every day, they instill in me a desire to carry on the mission to bring justice to the students society expected wouldn’t succeed. My mentor has been the constant voice in my head assuring me that with passion and dedication, I can achieve greatness. She has given me the invaluable gift of faith in myself. I can wish for nothing more in life than to someday be for future generations of students what these women have been for me.

When I look back on the past two years and think of how they would have been had I not become a part of the McNair Scholars Program, I am deeply saddened. I am reminded of the importance of challenging myself in every aspect of my life, to set the bar higher than necessary and never second guess the decisions I make. I have learned to respect and admire myself as someone who has beat overwhelming odds to get to where I am today. I can say that for the first time in my life, I am genuinely proud of myself. And I owe it all to the people in this room. They have helped me to realize the endlessness of my potential, to own the triumphs I earn, to find beauty and inspiration in the changes my life endures, and to count on myself to make the best choices for me. But most of all, the McNair Scholars family has helped me to challenge the biggest obstacle I have ever faced -- myself.
2006 Scholar

Krystelle Jean-Michel
Council for Opportunity in Education’s 2008 International Leadership Training Program in Liverpool, England

2007-08 Scholar

Mickey Johnson

2005 Scholars

Antonio Rodriguez
Received an Internship with the National Science Foundation (NSF)

Christine Goldstein
Conservation Resource Specialist, Clifty Creek Watershed Group

Toya Wilson
Received a Vince Demuzio paid governmental Internship for undergraduate SIUC students interested in professional careers in politics and with state governments

2004 Scholars

Maria Guerrero: National Labor Relations Board, Washington D.C.

Deanese Williams: 2yr. Residency Program Chicago Tribune-Herald

Sydney Dillard: Ministry of Education Talent Cultivation Project of Taiwanese Literature, History, and Art in Globalization

Carl Alexander: Structural Engineer, Employed by Bechtel SAIC Company, LLC. Assigned Project: Yucca Mountain Project

2003 Scholar

Kandace Fisher
Housing & Environmental Design Specialist at the University of Missouri, St. Louis Extension

2006 Scholars

Chasity Love
With her mentor, has an article under review for publication.

Stacie Wallace
Accepted a position as a TA for a Psychology 102 class here at SIUC.
Overseas with McNair

“The Most Memorable Experience of my Life!”
By Jennie Irwin

Going to Finland was an amazing experience that will stay with me throughout my entire life. Not only did I get to experience a new country, but I was able to travel and see for myself what the rest of the world had to offer. I was able to inexpensively travel to Ireland, Germany, Sweden, England, and Italy. My experience turned other people’s stories into a reality through my own eyes and perspective. I went to Finland in the middle of the winter and the days were dark and cold. The first word I learned there was “kiitos” which means “thank you.” As my Finnish got a little better, I would try to fit in with a Finnish accent while speaking. That did not last long because the Finns picked up that I was only able to say one sentence and could not carry on a conversation! It was interesting to experience what it was like to be an American in another country. My best friend and I made fools of ourselves everyday...so much that we always had a good story to tell! I roomed in a building with students from all over the world. I became best friends with a girl from Belgium and a guy from Mexico. Becoming best friends with them was an amazing cultural learning experience. Overall, if I could do it again, I would in a heartbeat! My study abroad experience was one of the more educational and memorable experiences in my life!

“Experiencing Culture”
By Krystelle Jean-Michel

As a first generation, low-income, minority student from the inner city of Chicago, the opportunity to study abroad does not present itself very often. Upon receiving information about the International Leadership Training Program I was motivated to take part in such a life altering experience. My time spent in Liverpool, England was an enlightening experience where I learned things about the culture that would not have been possible in a classroom setting. Most of my days started with insightful lectures on topics ranging from racism to union labor organizations. On weekends we had scheduled field trips to London, Amsterdam, and Antwerp. Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the experience was visiting the other cities, getting a feel for the locals, and fully immersing myself in the cultures. I think this opportunity has enabled me to gain a new perspective about myself and some of my biases. Most importantly it has given me an insatiable appetite for knowledge of cultures. I highly recommend other scholars to take part in future COE Leadership Programs. It’s an opportunity of a lifetime that should not be passed up.