

*Before you can
make a dream come
true, you must first
have one.*

Ronald E. McNair

Messages from McNair

McNair Scholars Program

University of North Dakota

Issue 40

Fall 2008

Upcoming Events

November 4

Spring Early Registration

November 6 & 13

Grant Writing Session

3:00-4:30 pm

342 McCannel Hall

November 24

McNair Monthly Meeting

4:00 pm Northside Cafe



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Greetings

Greetings McNair Scholars, Mentors and Supporters! The fall semester is moving right along and we welcome the returning McNair Scholars as well as those recently accepted into the program. The new academic year always brings both opportunities and challenges, and we look forward to assisting you in achieving your educational goals successfully. Patrice and Jill meet regularly to plan activities that will provide you the kind of information and experiences that lead you down the "Graduate School Path", and I encourage you to take full advantage of all the program offers. Please feel free to stop in and visit me as well, my door is always open and I am interested in your progress!

Elaine Metcalfe, Director
UND TRIO Programs

"Your First Real Taste of Academic Culture"

An Article Review by Desiree Bernal, McNair Scholar

Reading the article entitled *Your First Real Taste of Academic Culture* by David Perlmutter helped me further understand the obstacles and benefits of a graduate school assistantship. The assistantship is what the author called the "prep" phase of your career and depending on how you handle it can decide your future. The article was a great guide to what you should and should not do during this time.

The article suggested there are several ways to overcome possible obstacles that I felt I could make use of. The first and most important is that I will need to request and design a reporting system for my achievements and goals. This thought reflects some of what I learned in my Directed Studies

course with Dr. Hume. She told us how you should never leave covering your behind to anyone but yourself. Another suggestion that she made was how graduate school is very competitive and unfortunately there are people who will do anything to sabotage you and your credibility. The second idea from that article I found useful suggested meeting with the professor to agree upon publishing goals and authorship credits. It was recommended that both of these points were done in writing whether it was email or in person. This way I will have proof of the work completed and show a proactive approach to what still needs to be worked on in the future. The third suggestion is when you make a commitment to do something such as an

assistantship, whether it is your ideal situation or not, you need to do it to your fullest potential. An assistantship is your proving ground and foundation. To leave cracks and flaws in that could possibly cause issues in moving forward in your career, which brings me to another tidbit from Dr. Hume. What she said to us is you have to literally take over your position as the low man on the totem pole. Do anything and everything that is asked of you even if some of the work is something that you do not care to do. The next point is to resolve student issues as your supervising professor would do as not to cause confusion for the students. The last point is to not get caught up in scoring “popularity points” (p. 3) by giving in to students complaints and give them what they want.

Life is about obstacles and I am thankful to have someone who is going through the graduate school and assistantship process right now. I often ask her questions about her experience and what it is like to be in the position that she is in. Though everyone tells me how difficult graduate school is but I don't see her struggling as it is often portrayed to me. There are many obstacles such as the

extra work of the assistantship added to your school work, selecting your committee, coming up with the best topic for your dissertation, writing the dissertation and defending it. Right now as an undergraduate and taking anywhere from twelve to eighteen credits a semester, being in class all day on most days of the week and the assignments, tests etc. for each of those classes. Doing this seems to be so much more work than taking one or two classes a week, grading students papers and other things asked of me by my supervising professor. I am hopeful to be in a situation where I am able to have a professor who is as understanding as my partner currently has. However, I am not putting down the difficulty of graduate school. After taking the Directed Studies course, reading this article and talking to my partner and others I am in full understanding of the difficulties of graduate school. I worked in Corporate America and have been through many difficult situations as a manager. I am confident in the professors here at the University of North Dakota to properly prepare me for graduate school.

I cannot talk about the hurdles of assistantship without

talking about the rewards. The first and most considerable is the experience itself. The exposure of doing what is considered the dirty work of grading papers and other presumed menial tasks will give you an idea of what is expected of you, and prepare you for the work involved in being a professor at an institute of higher learning. The second benefit is that you can learn to network with other professors and give you the skills to be the best you can be. The last benefit is that you get to pick the outcome of your career by giving it your all.

Though I do not take graduate school for what it is for granted, I still feel that I am ready for the challenge. This article gave me some really great suggestions on some very important tasks. I plan to take this information and keep it close to me in order to rely on it later on when I get to graduate school. The points discussed above are very helpful and insightful, which made me really think about the possibilities of benefits and obstacles to overcome. Assistantships can be your worst enemy or your best friend depending on what you do with it.

Scholar news

Donations of new backpacks and school supplies were collected from McNair scholars and staff for the Backpacks for Brilliance program benefitting families of special needs children in the Grand Forks area.

The 21st Annual Conference of the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) in Logan, UT was attended by **Dr. Jacque Gray**, Erin Martin, **Sierra Abe** and **Kyle Hill** June 20-24. The group presented a poster, ‘Establishing Community Based Research with American Indian Communities.’ **Kyle Hill** was elected Student Representative to the SIP Executive Council.

“Why Aren’t You Talking?”

A Reflection paper by Kyle Gustafson, McNair Scholar

This paper was intriguing to me because I know several graduate students; one in particular seems to have a relationship with their adviser that lacks communication. I have been involved with research though the school for over a year now and understand how stressful many aspects of graduate school could be.

In this paper, Karen Head makes some interesting points about the need to develop a positive relationship with one’s adviser. The most notable point she makes is that graduate students need to ask questions. Head says, “The fear of the adviser’s disapproval is so strong that the student will not ask questions—about anything.” I can relate to this. In the back of my mind, there is always that

feeling that my mentor may be disappointed in me for one thing or another. However, I do not let that feeling overcome me. I will always ask questions, even if I feel like my adviser may expect me to know the answer. In fact, my mentor has complimented me on the fact that I ask questions and seek advisement when I need it.

I think all graduate students and many undergraduates who are involved in research can relate to Karen’s paper in at least one dimension. Hopefully I can maintain strong communication with my mentor and get through graduate school without the worry of an unsupportive or disappointed adviser. But if I do begin to worry, I will be sure to maintain adequate communication.

Alumni News and Updates

In August, **Laiel Baker** received her Ph.D. from UND in Clinical Psychology. Her dissertation was entitled, “Convergent and Discriminant Validity of Biculturalism and Depression Among Northern Plains American Indians.”

Scott Guldseth, UND’s first McNair Ph.D. was inducted into the UND Athletic Hall of Fame. Guldseth is the only men’s basketball player in UND history to receive an NCAA postgraduate scholarship. After earning his bachelor’s degree in psychology from UND in 1995, Guldseth later earned Masters and Doctorate degrees in clinical psychology from UND. He currently resides in Minneapolis, where he practices psychology.

Welcome New Scholars

Hi, my name is **Dale C. Brunelle**. I grew up in the Turtle Mountains and that's about as big as I like my mountains. During high school I attended Upward Bound from 1992-1994. After graduating I attended Minot State University

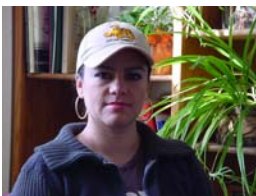


for 2 years and then transferred to UND. Since then I have been in and out of school for a little over a decade. About 2 years ago I decided to graduate and will be graduating in May 2009.

I've been married to a beautiful woman, Mozelle, for seven years and we have 2 smart, but sneaky children.:Lillian Rain 6 and Anthony James 1. Oh ya, we also have a long haired Chihuahua named Rosebud.

After Graduation I plan on getting a Ph.D. in Biology. I would like to do my future research on animal behavior and co-evolutionary interactions, with possibly some genomic analysis. Hopefully in the end I can get a Professorship at a college and pass on my knowledge to others.

Hi, my name is **Andrea Estling**; I am originally from Bogota, Colombia South America. I have been living in the United States for the past 6 years with my husband and daughter. I



have been taking classes at UND for two years; it is my intention to get a degree in Spanish. After graduating from UND, I plan on attending graduate school at the University of Minnesota or

Mankato State University, to extend my studies in Spanish and Latin American cultures. In addition, I hope to take my experiences of coming to a land with a different language and customs and help those individuals going through similar circumstances, just as the McNair pro-

gram is helping me. Once I have completed my university experience, it is my goal to be teaching at the College level. To help others improve as others have helped me improve, is not only my long term goal but my wish as well.

Hello, my name is **Kyle Gustafson**. I am currently a senior at the University of North Dakota. I am pursuing a major in Fisheries & Wildlife Biology with an emphasis in Wildlife Biology. I am the current president of The



Wildlife Society and have been involved in amphibian population research for Dr. Robert Newman in the Biology Department since May of 2007. I became involved in research through an Ad-

vanced Undergraduate Research Award (AURA), funded by EPSCoR, which allowed me a rare opportunity to research wood frog populations in Denali National Park, Alaska. Since I have been back in Grand Forks, I have been performing skeletochronology techniques to estimate ages of frog from Alaska and North Dakota. I have also been building a geodatabase using GIS software in order to analyze occupancy data through landscape variables.

Through my experiences in the McNair program, I hope to obtain a doctoral degree in Ecological and Evolutionary Biology allowing me to have an upper-level job as a Wildlife Biologist in a federal agency, such as: the Fish and Wildlife Service, or the U.S. Geological Survey. I want to be able to do my own research while taking an active role in wildlife and habitat conservation.

My name is **Matthew Munoz** and I am from Arvada, Colorado (a suburb of Denver). I am double majoring in the fields of Communication and Graphic Design with an entrepreneurial track.



Through McNair I plan to work towards a higher education degree in the field of Educational Leadership.

I have been a very active person on the campus of the University of North Dakota. I play intramural hockey, serve as a Emerging Leader mentor, facilitate in Greek recruitment and overall involvement, work for both the Dakota Student Newspaper and Sign & Design in the Memorial Union. None of this would have been possible if it wasn't for the organization of Delta Tau Delta fraternity. This organization has played a vital role in my maturity and development as an adult. Through this organization I have been able to attend national and regional conferences, network nationally, gain further leadership opportunities and receive scholarships for academic performance and leadership abilities.

I am grateful to be a McNair Scholar because the program presented itself to me by pure luck. Patrice and I talked about the program because we were across from each other's kiosks and I just wanted to know what TRIO was an acronym for, but she took it further and gave me information about the this program. Like my fraternity I plan to utilize McNair as a networking opportunity, further develop my research skills, and most importantly move further in schooling than any member of my family has imagined.

My name is **Katie Collette** and I've lived in Grand Forks since 1997 with my son, Kurt, who just turned 13-years-old. I am currently a Junior in the Chemistry program at UND. I will



graduate in May 2010 with a major in Chemistry, the Biochemistry option, and Minors in Psychology and Visual Arts. I am planning to pursue doctoral work in Pharmacology, Physiology,

and Therapeutics (PPT). My career plans are in the area of medical research, specifically the neurobiology of mental illness. In my spare time, I spend time helping my son stay organized, watching movies with him, knitting with friends, and reading books when I have time (which isn't often during the school year). One of these days, I'll find time to get back to the gym. I'm excited to be in the McNair program because of the opportunities and support it provides.

Hi my name is **Brandon Lee Helseth**. I just graduated with my Associate in Arts Degree from Lake Region State College this spring. I



am excited to be at the University of North Dakota to study Psychology. I am here to pursue a degree in Clinical Psychology. I am interested in Alzheimer's. I first became interested in Psy-

chology when I took Intro to Psychology at Lake Region State College. After taking Abnormal Psychology there, I discovered that I was interested in Mental diseases and disorders particularly those relating to the brain.

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Answers: 1.e; 2.i; 3.a; 4.g; 5.b; 6.j; 7.d; 8.f; 9.h; 10.c.

10) Mephitic	j.	Relating to the holding of something in trust for another.
9) Propound	i.	Exceeding the stated, standard, or prescribed number.
8) Contemn	h.	To offer for consideration; to put forward; to propose.
7) Emolument	g.	Displaying or suggesting a lack of maturity; juvenile; childish.
6) Fiduciary	f.	To regard or treat with disdain or contempt; to scorn; to despise.
5) Anodyne	e.	Of or belonging to the summer. gain; compensation.
4) Puerile	d.	The wages or perquisites arising from office, employment, or labor;
3) Brut	c.	Poisonous; noxious.
2) Supernumerary	b.	Anything that calms, comforts, or soothes disturbed feelings.
1) Aestival	a.	To report; to noise abroad.

Match meanings and memorize, then come into the McNair Office and earn a treat!

Words for Wits