

11-2014

## Telemetry, November 2014

McNair Scholars Program (University of Northern Iowa)

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# Telemetry

McNair Scholars Program Quarterly Newsletter  
at the University of Northern Iowa

November 2014

**STEP UP** your game with research

Learn how to **find the FUNDS**

Explore **NEW** opportunities



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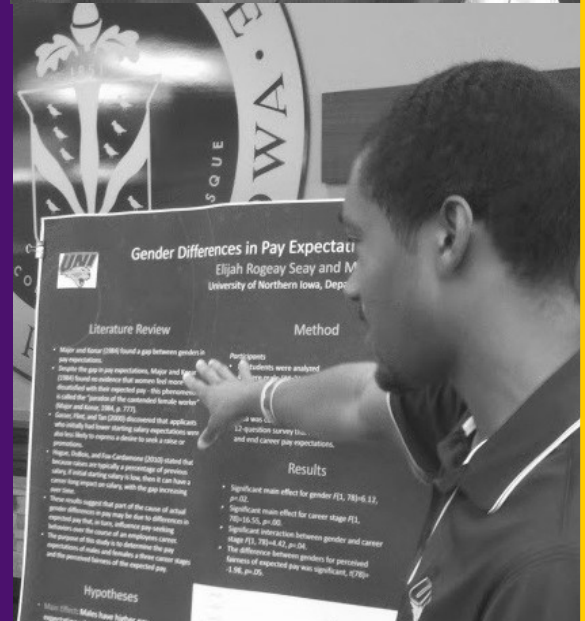
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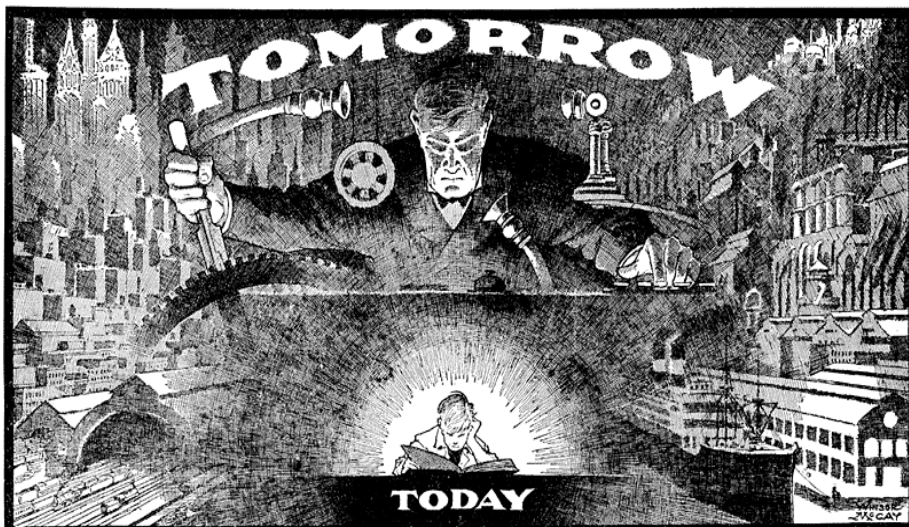
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## Message from the Director

Perhaps the most significant event in the UNI McNair Scholars Program this semester is the addition of a new Graduate Assistant. Tigstu (call me 'Tig') Woldeyohannis. Tig is a grad student in the Public Policy Program and has a wealth of experience in government affairs and management, both locally and internationally. We're fortunate to be able to call on his skills and experience to enhance the McNair Program.

Since the end of the summer research program, our summer scholars, Brittanie Dotson and Vanessa Espinoza, have both been able to make oral and/or poster presentations of their work. Our website and this edition of Telemetry have features on these presentations.

Most of our senior scholars are working closely with McNair staff as the process of applying to graduate programs enters the "serious" phase. Deadlines are approaching, but our preparation work is paying off in lowered anxiety, high quality application materials, and the knowledge that the targeted programs have been chosen for the right reasons – what we used to call a "good person-environment" fit.

November also means its time to take the GRE. McNair scholars should contact the McNair Office to obtain critical information regarding the registration process.

As I've said before in this space, if you're new to McNair, take some time to look around our website <http://www.uni.edu/web/mcnair> and at our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/UNIMcNair>.

If you find that you may be interested in our program, and think that you may qualify, come by the office, give us a call, write a letter or an email or a text, or come up with a new way to communicate with us.

*Regards,*

**Dr. Dennis M. Irons, Director**  
McNair Scholars Program  
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## EVENTS

### November

McNair Seminars  
Wednesdays at 3:30pm in the ITTC Veranda:

26 Thanksgiving Break—No Seminar

### December

5 Test Anxiety

10 Ugly Sweater Party & Graduate Reception

17 Final Weeks—No Seminar

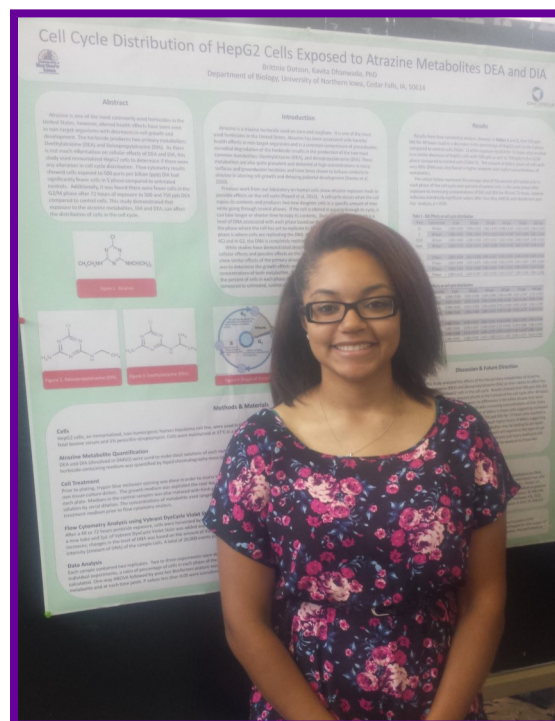
Check out the **Calendar** webpage to see the entire Fall 2014 Schedule.

## Still Accepting Applications

The McNair Program is still accepting application! Share with friends and classmates! Learn more on our webpage **How To Apply.**

## Shout-out — Brittanie Dotson

Brittanie is pictured below with her research poster at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. She also recently presented at another conference as well!





# Graduate Student Mentor Program (GSMP)

McNair is introducing a new program to help our students create connections with graduate students! Read more about the program below and please email Tig Woldeyohannis (woldeyot@uni.edu) if you have any questions.

## Description

The graduate student mentor program intends to create a link between current McNair Scholars at the University of Northern Iowa with current doctoral candidates at their prospective programs of study. The purpose of the program is to allow McNair scholars to engage with doctoral candidates who will assist them in the process of developing a high quality graduate school application.

## Benefits of the Graduate Student Mentor Program

- Advice and information from current doctoral candidates that is not typically available to applicants
- Assistance navigating the application process from a current student who has recently gone through the admissions process at your prospective program of study
- Additional support in crafting your personal statement by a current member of the program to which you are applying
- Opportunities to receive answers to questions you might not otherwise be able to receive
- Increased sense of belonging and confidence in your graduate school application

## How does it work?

1. Students identify the program and the school/s to which they are applying.
2. Students [contact McNair staff](#) to identify potential graduate student mentors with whom they can communicate.
3. Once you have the contact information of a current graduate student at the program of your interest, you may begin email communication.
4. For your first email, we recommend that you use our sample email format. Graduate students and faculty members are busy, so it is important to keep your emails brief and professional.
5. Students can communicate with graduate student mentors during the application season via email, Skype, or other methods that work for both partners. However, make sure your first email and ask which method of communication your mentor prefers.
6. We recommend McNair students maintain regular contact with their graduate student mentor throughout the application process, asking and sharing info about their research projects, interests, statements of purpose, their goals and other aspects of the program they are intending to apply.

**Learn more at <http://uni.edu/web/mcnair/graduate-student-mentor-program>**



## New Faces — Tigstu Woldeyohanns

The McNair Scholars Program has a new face in the office. We would like to welcome Tigstu Woldeyohanns as our new Graduate Assistant.

Read Tigstu's message below:

My name is Tigstu (in short "Tig"). I am a graduate student at UNI Masters of Public Policy program. I am extremely excited and humbled to join the McNair Scholar Program as a graduate assistant. After graduation I plan to work on International Development issues in developing countries. In the meantime however, I am looking forward to serving you as a graduate assistant at McNair. Please don't hesitate to shoot me an email or stop by my office at McNair center anytime.

## Shout-out — Vanessa Espinoza

Vanessa Espinoza (pictured on the right), senior, presented to a Latinos in US class at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, regarding her research from this summer's Summer Research Internship (SRI).

Her research focused on the path Latino students have to go through before attending college, similarities in their culture and life at home and school (struggles, adversity, and discrimination) and their attribution to success.

Vanessa also recently performed "Migrants' Words: Scenes of Violence in Everyday Life" with others from UNI at the University of Arizona's Latin American Studies Conference.



# Summer Research, Fellowship and Internship Opportunities

Check out some great summer opportunities below. For a full list, please visit our [website](#).

## WAVE Fellows Program at Caltech

Application Deadline: January 7, 2015

- The WAVE Fellows program provides support for talented undergraduates intent on pursuing a Ph.D. to conduct a 10-week summer research project at Caltech. Caltech's WAVE Fellows program aims to foster diversity by increasing the participation of underrepresented students in science and engineering Ph.D. programs and to make Caltech's programs more visible and accessible to students not traditionally exposed to Caltech. Support: WAVE Fellows will receive a \$6000 award for the ten-week program. An additional \$500 housing and travel supplement will be provided. You can find more information about this program at: <http://www.sfp.caltech.edu/programs/wavefellows>.

## 2015 Summer Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (SUROP)

Application Deadline: February 1, 2015

- The Summer Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (SUROP) at Kansas State University gives undergraduates from underrepresented groups a first-hand experience with the research process. This experience is designed to help students prepare for graduate school and other advanced study. Participation in a program such as SUROP provides a first-hand look at the process and excitement of discovery through research and such experience is viewed favorably by the admissions committees for graduate and professional schools. Apply and learn further information on the SUROP website: <http://www.k-state.edu/grad/academics/suop/suop.html>.

## Opportunities in Genomics Research (OGR)

Application Deadline: Application opens online December 5, 2014

- The Washington University School of Medicine is offering two programs this summer: Undergraduate Scholars, an eight-week summer program and Extensive Study, a one-year post-baccalaureate program. Both programs include conducting research with premier investigators in genomics and genetics as well as disciplines such as: cancer biology, molecular biology, immunology, and others. Supplemental activities for both programs include: GRE preparation, journal club, seminars and career counseling and workshops. We provide a competitive stipend/salary, housing (summer program only), and travel to St. Louis. To learn more please visit their website at <http://genome.wustl.edu/outreach>.

## White House Fellows Program

Application Deadline: January 15, 2015

- The program consists of a full-time work placement in the offices of Cabinet Secretaries, senior White House staff, and other high-ranking Administration officials. During a year in Washington, DC, Fellows also participate in a robust education program designed to provide a behind-the-scenes look into the inner workings of the Federal government. It is an extraordinary year that yields a lifetime of rewards. Learn more about the White House Fellows program at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/fellows>

## AMGENS Scholars Program

Application Deadline: February 15, 2015

- Caltech's Amgen Scholars Program is geared towards students in biology, chemistry, and biotechnology fields. Some of these fields include biology, biochemistry, bioengineering, chemical and bio-molecular engineering, and chemistry. Support: Amgen Scholars will receive a \$6000 award, round-trip air transportation, campus housing, and a food allowance. You can find more information about this program on their website [www.sfp.caltech.edu/programs/amgen\\_scholars](http://www.sfp.caltech.edu/programs/amgen_scholars).

# Writing the Personal Statement

Below is feedback from three of our McNair Scholars who recently attended the Don Asher Personal Statement Workshop in the Wisconsin Dells.

## Brittnie Dotson

### 1. What was the best piece of advice (or something you learned) from the workshop?

To be geographically open to any graduate or medical program in the country. Don't just go to places that are near your family or where you currently live.

### 2. What advice do you have for other McNair Scholars writing their personal statements?

Customize your personal statement to each school you apply to.

### 3. What was the best part of the trip?

Best part was meeting new people at the conference and networking.

## Laura Castro

### 1. What was the best piece of advice (or something you learned) from the workshop?

I think the part where he told us that we deserve funding was just mind blowing. Never thought of it that way. And all the other methods of funding and support available that I didn't even think about was crazy.

The timeline he explained during his talk was also very eye opening. I didn't even take into consideration some of the things he mentioned and how we had to get them in earlier since people expect that from McNair scholars. The whole talk was just a massive shock to the system but I feel more prepared, definitely.

### 2. What advice do you have for other McNair Scholars writing their personal statements?

His simple phrase: "clarity of purpose is seductive." Taken out of context is slightly awkward but he explained that a clear personal statement full of authority is more valuable than a rambling mess, which is understandable. The way he said it though, really got to me.

### 3. What was the best part of the trip?

I really enjoyed the drive-in restaurant we stopped at on our drive back despite being miserably sick. The banana split was insane so it made me feel a bit better. And also the chance to get to know Brittnie, Virginia and Mary Ann better was cool too.

## McNair and SSS Senior Retreat

Friday, September 26 – Saturday, September 27, 2014

Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

**Featured Presenter: Donald Asher**



### Virginia McCall

**1. What was the best piece of advice (or something you learned) from the workshop?**

Applying to multiple schools increases your chances of getting into a program somewhere. Research your schools of interest, view profiles of faculty members. If they have a repulsive photo up then you probably do not want to choose them for your mentor or advisor. "Out of all the photos they could have chosen to represent them, they chose that one because they thought it looked good" - Don Asher.

**2. What advice do you have for other McNair Scholars writing their personal statements?**

The sooner you start the better. Incorporate things you have learned from your research of the schools in your personal statement to show that you are a perfect match for their program. Your personal statement is your individual interview on paper. Wow them the first time.

**3. What was the best part of the trip?**

I personally enjoyed the speaker and feel it was the best part of the trip because of the wealth of information he possesses. He was also funny.



# MCNAIR STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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To submit articles for consideration in *Telemetry* contact mcnair@uni.edu.  
With any questions or concerns feel free to contact the McNair Staff listed above.

## **Contact Us**

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