



# THE MCNAIR CHRONICLE

Lawrence, Kansas

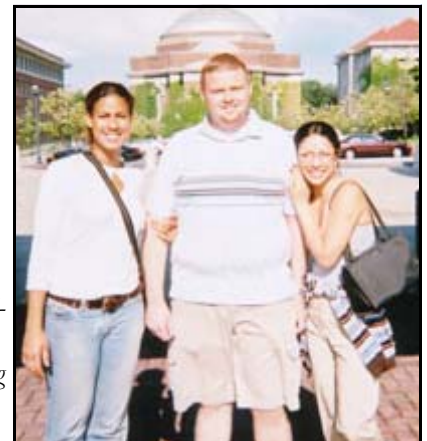
## Scholars Attend Conference in Buffalo

By Michael Lemon  
McNair Scholar

*This past summer I was given the opportunity to attend a research conference in Buffalo, New York with the McNair Scholars Program. Project Coordinator Robert Rodriguez accompanied fellow Scholars Katherine Acosta, Crystal Clark, and me on the trip. Once we arrived in Buffalo and got settled in, we all went to a local restaurant for lunch. From that point on, we all began to bond and soon realized that this trip was going to be a memorable experience. The conference offered activities for us to participate in every day. I met Scholars from other universities around the country, and it became clear to me how important the McNair Scholars Program is to not only me, but also to many other students across the United States.*

*The conference agenda and presentations took up the majority of our time during the day, but in our time off, we were encouraged to see what Buffalo had to offer. One afternoon after lunch, we all walked around downtown. There were lots of booths to buy things, from flowers to gifts to lunch. At night, Scholars had free time and were able to enjoy the nightlife. It was a great opportunity for scholars to get to know each other in a less formal setting. One of the highlights of the trip was an excursion to Canada. I had always wanted to see Niagara Falls, but never thought I would have the chance to. The entire trip was wonderful because I got to see a part of the world I'd never been to and establish a few really close friendships.*

*It was fascinating to see how hard everyone worked on their projects and then to realize how far that they had come in such a small amount of time. Listening to other Scholars' presentations was very inspiring because at the time, my project was not complete and it seemed that the work would never end. From motivational speakers to personal testimonies, the Buffalo Conference restored faith in myself about getting into graduate school. Looking back, the conference made me recognize that although some of the odds might be against me, it is still very possible for me to get into a graduate program and be successful in my future goals.*



From L to R: Crystal Clark, Michael Lemon and Katherine Acosta.

## Heartland McNair Conference a Success

By Robert Rodriguez  
Project Coordinator

The Seventh Annual MO-KAN-NE Heartland McNair Conference was once again a resounding success thanks to the excellent work by conference coordinators Laura Boyer (McNair assistant director at Kansas State University) and Tanya Kooi (McNair academic services coordinator at the University of Kansas). Over 100 students, including nine University of Kansas McNair Scholars, attended the conference that was held at the Marriott Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri.

The Scholars participated in a graduate recruitment fair, gave oral and poster presentations of their research projects, and were treated to a host of guest speakers including Dr. Pamela Maimer of the U.S. Department of Education. The conference closed with an inspirational speech by legendary Negro Leagues baseball player Buck O'Neil.

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### McNair Scholars Program

*This program is federally funded by the United States Department of Education in the amount of \$258,469.*

#### Dr. Ngondi Kamatuka

Director, Educational  
Opportunity Programs

#### Robert Rodriguez

Project Coordinator

#### Tanya Kooi

Academic Services Coordinator

#### John Bruni

Program Assistant

#### Shakura Jackson

Office Manager

#### Vivian Volante

Student Assistant

## Former Scholar Accolades

### *Jo Marie Hart*

Jo Marie, a painter studying at Columbia University, won first place in the art competition "Curator's Choice 2003" at Stefan Stux Gallery in Soho, New York City and discussed her art in a panel on Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>.

### *Ahmad M. Khalil*

The American Society of Human Genetics selected Ahmad as a finalist in the pre-doctoral category of the 2003 Student Awards competition as part of the society's 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting in Los Angeles in November. Ahmad is studying at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

## Scholars Present Research at Penn State

By Gerardo Castillo  
McNair Scholar

*Pennsylvania was cool in September, and the view of the mountains from my hotel room window was breathtaking. The experience of presenting my research at the Penn State Conference was rewarding and a little unnerving, but I managed not to look nervous and people seemed to be genuinely interested in my topic.*

*The tours through the town of State College were delightful, but the town's boundaries barely extended past Penn State's campus (and I thought Lawrence was small). The campus was large and lush; it was everything one would expect from an old east coast university.*

*Eliticia Vieyra, Jennifer Sweeton, Mulubrhan Misgana and I had a wonderful time, met some fascinating people, and listened to interesting presentations. We seemed to "click" particularly well with McNair Scholars from San Diego. At the end of it all, we were all tired and eager to return to Lawrence, but heavy rains ensured us of an extra day in Pennsylvania as our flight was postponed.*



From L to R: Gerardo Castillo, Samuel Kooi, Mulubrhan Misgana, Jennifer Sweeton, Eliticia Vieyra.

## McNair Mentor Accolades



### *Jack Fincham*

Prof. Fincham, Dean of Pharmacy, delivered the Waters Lecture for the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy on Aug. 21. Fincham was recently inducted into the Beatrice Educational Foundation Hall of Fame at Beatrice High School in Nebraska.

### *Shane J. Lopez*

The Ned Fleming Trust Award for distinguished teaching, scholarship, and service was awarded at commencement 2003 to Prof. Lopez, who is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Research in Education.

### *Cornell Pewewardy*

Cornell Pewewardy, Associate Professor of Teaching and Leadership, was named the 2002-03 Outstanding Organization Adviser for his work with the First Nations Student Association on April 30 at the KU Student Senate Achievements Awards in Leadership and Service.

### *Bill Staples*

Prof. Staples, Chair of Sociology, presented "Culture of Surveillance Revisited: 'Total Information Awareness' and the New Privacy Landscape" on Aug. 18 at a session of the annual meeting of American Sociological Association in Atlanta, Georgia. His book, *Power, Profits and Patriarchy: The Social Organization of Work at a British Metal Trades Firm, 1791-1922* (with Clifford Staples) was selected for a 2003 ASA book award.

### *Peter Ukpokodu*

Prof. Ukpokodu, Chair of African and African-American Studies, published a review of Frances Reid and Deborah Hoffmann's film *Long Night's Journey into Day*, in the *American Historical Review*. Prof. Ukpokodu also presented "African Adaptations of Greek Classics: Tewfiq al-Hakim, Ola Rotimi and Athol Fugard" at the annual conference of African Literature Association in Alexandria, Egypt, in March.

### *Jim Woelfel*

Professor of Humanities and Western Civilization and philosophy, Woelfel presented "Autobiography as Core Text: The Case for John Stuart Mill" and chaired a session at the annual conference of the Association for Core Texts and Courses in Atlanta, Georgia last April.

## Understanding Research

By Dr. Allan Miller  
McNair Instructor

Over the past four years, the spring semester interdisciplinary research methods class for the McNair Scholars at Kansas University has come to be a seminar in the truest sense. In the nineteenth century, European universities came to believe that the methodology of scholarly inquiry was as important as the informational content of a subject. The content might be less specialized in an attempt to prepare students to be leaders in society who gained experience in a variety of research endeavors.

The Understanding Research course for McNair Scholars attempts to introduce a variety of research methodologies from the arts and sciences. Students learn to appreciate the extensive research procedures that are both quantitative and qualitative in nature. On another level, students get to apply these various strategies in co-operative small group exercises.

The overall goal of studying numerous research strategies for the serious McNair Scholar is to be able to pick an appropriate approach for an intensive summer research project under the direction of an experienced Kansas University researcher. Those university reformers and inventors of the seminar approach from over one hundred years ago would be proud of the McNair Scholars of the past four years who have epitomized the idea of coming together to work on research rather than to merely hear and read about it.

## Spring 2004 Calendar

### January

30 Symposium, 4pm – 6 pm  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall

### February

27 Symposium, 4pm – 6 pm,  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall

### March

20-28 Spring Break

### April

2 Symposium, 4pm – 6 pm,  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall  
30 Symposium, 4pm– 6 pm,  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall

### May

5 Annual Awards Banquet, 6pm – 8 pm,  
Adams Alumni Center  
14 Stop Day  
23 Commencement

## McNair Scholar Achievements

### Jennifer Sweeton

was selected as a Rhodes Scholarship Semi-Finalist. This honor is the most prestigious level of Rhodes competition that any of our McNair Scholars has ever reached. Jennifer's Semi-Finalist honor was front-page news in the *University Daily Kansan* on Nov. 19th.

### Travis Watkins

was recognized with a photo and article on the front page of the sports section in the *Lawrence Journal-World* on Nov. 12th. Travis is a member of the Tangerine Bowl-bound KU Football Team. Travis has been sidelined for part of the KU football season having suffered a broken ankle during an August scrimmage. The *Kansas City Star* published an article about Travis as well.

### LaTasha Reed

Two photos that include LaTasha were front page news in *In the Center*, a KU Medical School newsletter, and *Nurse Network*, which covers the Kansas City area. LaTasha participated in the KUMC Mobile Clinic which visited Nicodemus, Kansas, a predominantly-African American town, to offer medical care support as part of the town's celebration. Also, an abstract of LaTasha's McNair research project was chosen for a poster presentation at a nursing society's scientific sessions at a convention in Toronto, Canada.

## New Student Assistant Joins McNair Staff

Vivian Volante is the new McNair student assistant. She is a first-year senior double majoring in communications and Spanish. She aspires to attend law school on the East Coast after graduation. Vivian is an active member of various organizations at KU. She is one of the founders and current secretary of Mu Sigma Upsilon, the first and only multicultural sorority in the Midwest. Recently, the sorority awarded her the National Academic Achievement Award for her outstanding academic performance throughout her four years at KU. She is also a member of the Golden Key Honor Society and National Collegiate Scholars Association. She looks forward to working with the McNair Scholars and staff. She says, "I am so proud to be working for a program that helps to support and improve the education of so many students."

## McNair Staff Achievements

### Dr. Ngondi Kamatuka, Director, Educational Opportunity Programs

was recently selected as the University of Kansas Classified Employee of the Month.

### Dr. John Bruni, Program Assistant, KU McNair Scholars Program

recently defended his dissertation in the KU Department of English to complete his requirements for the doctoral degree. His dissertation is entitled, "Making the Fittest Culture: Social Darwinism and American Naturalist Writing at the Turn of the Twentieth Century."

### Interested in becoming a KU McNair Scholar?

Applications are now being accepted for the current academic year. Call (785) 864-3412, or send an email to [mcnair@ku.edu](mailto:mcnair@ku.edu) for more information.

### Are you a former KU McNair Scholar?

Call us toll free at 1-877-842-5232 or send an email to [mcnair@ku.edu](mailto:mcnair@ku.edu), and we will include an article about you in the next issue of *The McNair Chronicle*.

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## *Scholar Spotlight: Jecarma Newton*

By Vivian Volante  
McNair Student Assistant

“Why stress out? Just get it done.” These are the words of KU student and recently admitted McNair Scholar, Jecarma Newton. With her calm attitude, strong ambition, and self-reliance, success is soon to follow.

Although she encounters many of the pressures that are common for many college students, she states that her faith helps to calm her and keep her focused on the tasks at hand. “It’s just not in my nature to be stressed.” She feels that preparation and organization are the keys to academic success. Jecarma also feels that individuals need to have an open mind about their future plans. She states, “I think a lot of people miss out on opportunities because they have their plans set in stone. They need to be flexible.” Although she has many goals, Jecarma has prepared herself for the many obstacles that she may encounter on her road to success and is willing to take a detour should it present itself.

Growing up in an area where students rarely excelled in academics motivated her to study secondary English education. She hopes that in doing so, she can help educate other students so that they, too can have the opportunities that she has had. Jecarama also hopes to one day own her own business. “It’s nice to have control over your own career, whether it is in teaching or something else.”



Jecarma Newton was accepted to the University of Kansas McNair Scholars Program during the fall 2003 semester.