In September 2005, Kirby Zimmerman, Yodit Gebremariam, Talia Martin, and I presented our research at the 9th annual McNair Heartland Conference in Kansas City. The Heartland Conference was a great environment for first-time presenters because the attendees provided each other with support and encouragement. The overall atmosphere of the conference had a relaxed and personal feel to it, and since the conference is regional, presenters and observers interacted comfortably.

By attending other Scholars’ presentations, I was able to observe different presentational styles and approaches to research. The first presentation I attended was entitled “His Wyf is Swyyved (sic): The Female-as-Pawn Archetype in Chaucer’s The Reeve’s Tale.” The presenter’s analysis of the story was excellent and it left such an impression on me that while reading Chaucer this semester for Western Civilization, I was able to apply the information I had learned from the talk. Overall, the conference was a learning experience and a chance to practice the art of presenting and realizing that practice really does make perfect. I was also inspired by the other Scholars’ presentations which reminded me of how much I enjoy being a part of a research community.
Momina Sims was inducted into the Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society in November 2005.

Michael Young has been awarded the Danny Zeck Scholarship.

Jesse Summers, former McNair Scholar, entered the PhD program in philosophy at UCLA in Fall 2005.

Ericka Morris, former McNair Scholar, began a teaching credential program in Fall 2005 at Eastern University in Pennsylvania.

Joni Murphy, former McNair Scholar, was appointed to the National Endowment for the Art’s Access to Artistic Excellence grant review panel. Murphy has also published an article, “Ancient Admonitions: The art of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith” for the NYC Museum of the American Indian at Gustav Heye Center.

Jennifer Sweeton, former McNair Scholar, has published a book entitled “Psychology Major’s Guide to Funding.”

Sarah Smarch, former McNair Scholar, received the Spring 2005 Columbia University Hertog Fellowship.

Robert Schwarz, former McNair Scholar, started a consulting firm, RSP & Associates, that specializes in education planning, city planning, and grant administration.

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Rick Snyder, M. Erik Wright Distinguished professor of psychology, spoke on December 3 to the Kansas Medical Education Foundation in Topeka on “The Psychology of Hope.”

Charles Marsh, associate professor of journalism, received the H.O.P.E. Award on November 5. Marsh was also presented with the Kemper Award.

Jim Orr, professor and chair of the division of biological sciences, was presented with the Kemper Award. Orr was also presented with the Ned N. Fleming Trust Award.

Don Stull, professor of anthropology, has been elected president of the Society for Applied Anthropology. Stull began his term in April at the Society’s annual meeting in Santa Fe, NM.

Daphne Fautin, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, was elected vice-chair of the science committee of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility.

Gunda Georg, distinguished professor of pharmacy, received a $10.4 million federal grant to mentor faculty members and support cancer research across the state of Kansas.

Anita Herzfeld, professor of Latin American studies, presented at the Mediterranean Studies Association Meeting on May 25 in Messina, Sicily, Italy. Herzfeld’s paper is titled “Historical Lunfardo: The Argentine ‘Language of Crime’ since the Italian Immigration.”

Lawrence Wrightsman, professor of psychology, will be publishing his book “Psychology of the Supreme Court” in February 2006.

Joe Donnelly, director of the Center for Physical Activity and Weight Management, has completed a study showing weight loss program counseling by phone is successful.

Cornel Pewewardy, associate professor of education and Indigenous Nations studies, was named the 2005 Scholars of Color Distinguished Scholar on April 13 in Montreal, Canada. Pewewardy also received the 2005 Anthony Daniels Award for Leadership and Achievement in Multicultural Education at the 10th annual Big 12 American Indian Student Leadership Conference held April 14-16 at KU.

Greg Welch, a former McNair Scholar at the University of Wyoming, is a new faculty member in the KU School of Education.
An Open Letter to Current McNair Scholars: “How I Was Hired as a University Professor”

By Tim Kochanski
Former KU McNair Scholar

Dear Scholars:

Since many of you will pursue work in academia after graduate school, I want to share some of the things I learned during the hiring process for an academic job. It turns out that the hiring process was very informal for me. I talked at length with the person in charge of the hiring process before I even submitted my application for the position. I also spoke with the chair of the department about more details regarding the department. I was nervous because I had already signed a contract to teach three courses at the local community college and taking this new position would mean I would not be able to teach the third class of my contract. Additionally, the department chair at the community college was one of my references. After I told him about the opportunity he was very accommodating and asked if I could recommend anyone to teach the final course at the community college. My other two references were not former advisors or professors of mine. One, a visiting assistant professor, I met while he was a Ph.D. student at the institution where I received my M.S. degree. The other was Dr. Robert Rodriguez, the associate director of the McNair Scholars Program at my undergraduate institution. So I took the “find someone who knows me” approach to selecting references.

The faculty member in charge of the hire informed me that he made the decision, the department chair would have to okay the hire, and the dean of the college would make the final offer. I padded my application packet with the usual things and also included a teaching philosophy, a sample syllabus, and a sample website from one of my previous courses. Once hired, I downloaded the faculty handbook which has all the details about what I am entitled to as a new unionized faculty member. If you are ever negotiating the terms of your hire with your department you should have the attitude that these benefits are simply expected and not something to be negotiated, especially if they are outlined in the faculty handbook. At that point I decided to contact the Housing Department to see about subsidized faculty housing to reduce my costs further. Although there was a faculty house for a cheap yearly rental, one of the other five new hires already had it. The director of housing gave me a good geographic overview of the town and found several possible apartments for me. She also volunteered to meet with potential landlords and to inspect properties that I was considering renting.

In conclusion, although the process was a lot like the “Wizard of Oz” and I did not necessarily know what the wizard was doing behind the curtain, the chair of the hiring committee, the department chair, the dean, and the various campus directors seemed to walk me through the process and to inform me of my options.

McNair Project Coordinator Earns Ph.D. and Promotion

KU McNair Scholars Program Project Coordinator Robert Rodriguez defended his doctoral dissertation in the KU Political Science Department in July 2005, thus completing requirements for the Ph.D. Dr. Rodriguez was subsequently promoted to Associate Director of the McNair Scholars Program. His dissertation is entitled, "A Comparative State Analysis of Professional Boxing Regulations." Dr. Rodriguez's dissertation committee included: Dr. Mark Joslyn (chair), Dr. Burdett Loomis, Dr. Allan Cigler, Dr. Bill Tuttle, and Dr. Don Haider-Markel. Dr. Rodriguez wishes to thank the staff at the University of California, Irvine Summer Academic Enrichment Program (SAEP), a program similar to the McNair Scholars Program, for instilling in him the desire to pursue a Ph.D. when he was an undergraduate.

New Academic Services Coordinator and Student Assistant Appointed

Allyson Flaster joined the McNair Scholars Program in August as the Academic Services Coordinator. Allyson was previously an advisor at an Educational Opportunity Center in the Boston Public Library. Allyson holds a Master of Education in Higher Education Administration from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Kelly Carson, a senior at KU majoring in Spanish, joined the McNair Staff in September 2005. She is a National Merit Scholarship recipient, a University Scholar, and a member of the KU Honors Program and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. Kelly is also the founder and co-coordinator of Project Bridge, a volunteer program that provides free ESL tutoring.

Are you a Former KU McNair Scholar?

Please visit our updated website at: www.ku.edu/~mcnair
Be sure to check out our "Degrees Earned by Former Scholars" page to ensure your information is up-to-date. You can update your academic and contact information on the site—just click on "Former Scholars" to get started!
Visit our recently updated Website!
www.ku.edu/~mcnair/

Scholar Spotlight: Joe Brewer

Meet one of our newest McNair Scholars, Joe Brewer! Joe is a senior anthropology major who studies Peruvian archaeology. He is presently conducting an honors thesis that explores how climactic and seismic events impacted the settlement and agricultural strategies of the Moche culture. Although he is passionate about his anthropological studies, he has many other interests as well, including drawing (he creates works as varied as landscapes and abstract collages) and football. In addition to his full-time studies, he works several hours per week at the Jayhawk Bookstore.

When asked what drives his love of learning and strong work ethic, Joe replies, “The desire to be the best.” He also lists the shining example of Professor John Hoopes, who is a highly experienced and knowledgeable scholar. Joe also believes the McNair Scholars Program contributes to his academic success because it has given him the information and tools needed to make decisions and ask the right questions.

Joe’s future plans include attending graduate school and earning his Ph.D. in archaeology, as well as living for an extended period in Peru. What he looks forward to most in his post-baccalaureate life is learning about grants administration, teaching others, traveling abroad, and conducting excavations. For, as Joe states, “There is a world of knowledge yet to be explored.”

Congratulations to Fall 2005 Graduate Andrew Roy!