

## President Hahs Meets with McNair Scholars

Newly appointed NEIU President, **Dr. Sharon Hahs**, met with McNair Scholars Friday, March 16. **Dr. Janet Fredericks**, Dean of the Graduate College, introduced Dr. Hahs and provided opening remarks. President Hahs greeted the Scholars and spoke of the importance of diversifying faculty in higher education. She pointed out that NEIU has the challenge of diversifying its faculty to mirror its student body, a population representative of the projected U.S. population in 2030.

Dr. Hahs commended the Scholars for their achievements and encouraged them to continue on their paths to success.

McNair Program Director, **Dr. Kim Sanborn**, provided an overview of the McNair Program at NEIU and invited the Scholars to introduce themselves. Scholars talked about their research and the ways NEIU has supported



NEIU President Hahs with McNair Scholars

their academic success. They agreed that faculty mentorship has been crucial to their achievements.

Dr. Kim Sanborn said of the event, "The time and attention Dr. Hahs gave the Scholars was very meaningful to them and sent a

powerful message of encouragement. The President inspired them not only through her insightful comments, but also through her interest in the Scholars' descriptions of their research topics and their reasons for pursuing academic careers."

## NEIU McNair at UNT Conference

Five Scholars attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas National McNair Scholars' Research Conference at the University of North Texas, February 16-18. The following Scholars presented papers:

**Kabir Avraham**, *Malandragem and the Hidden Transcript: A Look at the Development of Black Subcultures in the United States and Brazil*

**Loren Henderson**, *Butch and Femme Identity Expression among African American Lesbians*

**Stephanie Navarro**, *Expression of Pain in the Art of Three Andalusian Artists: Federico García Lorca, Pablo Picasso and Manuel de Falla*

**Mimi Pounds**, *Power Dynamics in Advertising: A Content and Textual Analysis of Gender and Race Portrayals in Fashion Magazines*.

In addition, **Alvin Raul Cardona** presented his creative project, the documentary film, *Los Pioneros (The Pioneers)*.

This is the third consecutive year NEIU Scholars have attended the UNT confer-

ence. Mentors **Dr. Susan Colon, Cyndi Moran, M.F.A.**, both of the Department of Communication, Media and Theater, **Dr. Brett Stockdill**, Department of Sociology, and McNair Academic Skills Specialist **Angela Vidal Rodriguez** accompanied the Scholars.

The opportunity to present research and creative projects at a conference is important to the development of McNair Scholars as future faculty members. Speaking of her presentation, Stephanie Navarro said "I feel encouraged in my ability to effectively convey my research-based ideas and conclusions in a formal academic setting. The highlight of the experience was having the audience respond to my presentation with interest and discovering how much I really know about my topic."

## Other Recent Research Presentations

In March, Scholar **Lisa Krause** presented at the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE) 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Educational Leadership Conference in Portland, Oregon. Her paper, *Gender Influence in the Perception of Social Attitudes about Aging Using Children's Draw-*

*ings of the Elderly*

, was part of a symposium on social learning implications

for intergenerational understanding hosted

by NEIU faculty member, **Dr. Lisa Hollis-Sawyer**. Krause said, "It felt good to be an authority on an art-based research topic."

Scholar **Melissa Anderson** presented research in Anaheim, California at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in November. She conducted her study, *Mechanistic Analysis of the Competition Between Selenocysteine Incorporation and Translation Termination*, during her Summer 2007 internship at Rutgers/UMNDJ (University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey).

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## Alumni News

**Jacqueline Aessa**, a graduate student in the Pure Math master's program at UIC, reports that she is taking three classes and is a pre-calculus teaching assistant. Jacqueline plans to graduate in May 2008.

**Silvia Avila** plans to begin graduate school in the fall. She is teaching high school dance at "After School Matters." In addition, she is an instructor at Parkman Elementary for the city's fifth grade ballroom dance program, "Having a Ball."

**Colleen Budziak** is a TA and in her second semester of the Chemistry Ph.D. program at UIC. She is finishing a project that may be published soon. Her advice to McNair Scholars interested in a Ph.D. program is that "everyone tells you it's a lot of work and they aren't joking! But it's an amazing experience; you meet so many people from around the world that are going through the same things as you."

**Crystal Epps** reports that she likes the social work department at Chicago State University. She feels the McNair experience was helpful and says, "I'm ahead of most of my cohort in regards to research and writing." Her advice to Scholars: "Make wise decisions as far as what graduate schools you pursue and apply for the DFI. A fellowship can make many different universities affordable."

**Samantha Hudson** will complete the MSW- Advance Standing Program at Whitney M. Young, Jr., School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University this May. She will attend the Lonnie E. Mitchell 9th Annual Substance Abuse and Mental Health Conference in Washington D.C. as a scholarship winner. Samantha plans to apply to a Ph.D. program at the University of Georgia, Atlanta.

**Dianne Madison** will apply for Master of Communication candidacy at NEIU. She says, "I have learned that graduate school requires a lot of time and research! However, I'm thankful to have this opportunity to pursue graduate studies."

**Michael Magee** received the National Association for Student Affairs Professionals (NASAP) Outstanding Graduate Student Award in February at the association's 53<sup>rd</sup> annual conference in Savannah, Georgia. This May, he will complete a master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction and College Students Affairs.

**Te'Aira Malone** began the NEIU Rehabilitation Counseling master's program in January. She received the Rehabilitation Services Administration Long-Term Training Scholarship for tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend.

**Elizabeth Maynard** is working on a Master of Arts in History at SUNY Binghamton. She mentions that because of the huge workload, she can only wish for time to attend academic conferences. She plans to go to the west coast for her Ph.D.

**Yalil Nieves** is a graduate student in Latin American Literatures and Cultures here at NEIU. She is a graduate assistant in the McNair office and teaches ESL at Daley Community College. Yalil says, "I love teaching people a language that allows them access to better opportunities."



NEIU grad students Nieves and Ortega

**Patricia Ortega**, a graduate student in the NEIU Political Science program, has been accepted by Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science honor society. She hopes to graduate this time next year.

**Eileen Rollerson** is finishing her second year at Loyola University and will graduate in May with an M.A. in Sociology. She expects to complete her Ph.D. coursework by December 2008. Eileen says, "I'm



Magee with NASAP award

pushing to be done by 2010 and with the help and favor of the Lord, I'll do it!"



Smith on a break from thesis writing

**Nakeishea Smith** completed her courses at MIT in December and is currently writing her thesis on land management. She will graduate in June and has been hired as a consultant for the Ministry of Energy & Environment in the Bahamas.

**Lina Sweiss** graduated from the M.A. Program in Social Science at the University of Chicago last summer and works with her advisor as a research assistant. She presented her thesis at the Society for Research in Child Development in Boston in March. She was accepted to the Ph.D. program in Human Development, Learning and Cultures at the University of British Columbia.

**Kemyta Terry** is finishing her first year of graduate studies in Political Science at Howard University. As part of her fellowship, Kemyta participates in an Africare internship. She says, "I have the opportunity to experience first hand how a non-government organization operates. Most exciting is that I get to meet so many different international dignitaries. For instance, I met Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Surleaf, the first female president of an African country. And while celebrating International Women's Day, I had the opportunity to meet Her Excellencies Hawa Ndilowe of Malawi and Inoge Mbukusita-Lewanika of Zambia!"

### December Grads

Scholars **Carolina Campos** and **Loren Henderson** graduated with honors in December. Campos, a Spanish major, graduated Magna Cum Laude and was accepted to the Chicago Teacher Fellows Program. Henderson, a sociology major, was a Summa Cum Laude graduate. She will present her research at the Midwest Sociological Society conference in April, and start her Ph.D. in Sociology at UIC this Fall.

## New Cohort Starts

Thirteen NEIU students have joined the McNair Scholars Program this semester. Each student will be advised by a faculty mentor and will receive services from the McNair staff.

### **Michael Adams, Jr., Communication, Media and Theater**

"My academic goals are to continue my studies in Communication and Studio Painting and earn a terminal degree in fine art. One of my professional goals is to teach art at the university level."

*Mentor: Cyndi Moran, M.F.A.*

### **Gwendolyn Austin, Justice Studies**

"I'd like to pursue a Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Policy with emphasis on women's issues. My graduate studies will improve my knowledge of social concerns and allow me to help carve out a better life for generations to come."

*Mentor: Jade Stanley, Ph.D.*

### **Theresa Bacchus, History**

"Upon graduation, I will pursue graduate studies leading to a Ph.D. in History. I'm especially interested in African American and Ethnic History, specifically how the United States has been shaped, and continues to be shaped, by African American and immigrant contributions."

*Mentor: Patrick Miller, Ph.D.*

### **Maria Chavez, Women's Studies**

"I want to be a role model for young people in my community by providing an example of dedication, tenacity, and success. My ultimate goal for the future is to become a Sociology/Women's Studies professor."

*Mentor: Laurie Fuller, Ph.D.*

### **Ignacio Estrada, Mathematics**

"When I finish my Ph.D. in Mathematics, I will be able to give back to my community. My dream is to see more Hispanic students in scientific disciplines. I want to become a teacher and help minorities and people in need."

*Mentor: David Rutschman, Ph.D.*

### **Preston Fairchild, Social Work**

"My main interest in the McNair Program is to learn more about research and to prepare myself for graduate school. Participating in the McNair Program will provide me an opportunity to conduct and present research about my community."

*Mentor: Najma Adam, Ph.D.*

### **Martha Flores, Anthropology**

"I look forward to getting into graduate school in order to earn a Ph.D. in Anthropology within the subfield of Archeology.

I'm very happy to think that I am following the footsteps of many incredible people in the field of archeology. I take pride knowing that I love to learn, and I look forward to passing this love to the next generation of aspiring anthropologist."

*Mentor: Jon Hageman, Ph.D.*

### **Keith Green, Social Work and Women's Studies**

"After graduating with a B.A. in Social Work, I will continue on for a master's degree and ultimately a Ph.D. in African American Studies. I'm interested in researching and identifying solutions to the issues which presently affect marginalized people within communities of color, like health epidemics, substance abuse, poverty, discrimination, oppression and racism."

*Mentor: Jade Stanley, Ph.D.*

### **Chrystyn Hart, English**

"I would like to study how changes in English society opened paths for changes in drama, literature and poetry. I strongly believe that history and literature are dependent on each other and feel obligated to make sure that in teaching either of them, I have the appropriate background in both."

*Mentor: Bradley Greenburg, Ph.D.*

### **Tracy Navarro, History**

"My academic goal is to get a Ph.D. in History and do my dissertation research in Mexico."

*Mentor: Christina Bueno, Ph.D.*

### **Krystle Pereira, Sociology**

"Upon completion of my B.A., I'll continue on to a Ph.D. in Sociology. I believe that the McNair Program will provide the resources I need to get into a Ph.D. program, and build the foundation in research that I'll need to be successful at the doctorate level."

*Mentor: Christina Gomez, Ph.D.*

### **Efrain Ramirez, Jr., Biology**

"I've always been interested in how things work and the manner in which things have come to be. Furthermore, I know that current knowledge is subject to change with time, so for these reasons, I hope to become a life-long learner. However, I have found even more fulfillment in sharing information with others, and I feel that teaching would be the most effective way to achieve this on a large scale."

*Mentor: Terrence Puryear, Ph.D.*

### **Elizabeth Rodriguez, English**

"Being Puerto Rican, I have personally experienced the prejudices that minorities

encounter in a world that is not used to viewing different groups as intellectual peers. By becoming an educated person, who is also a minority, I will help break down the stereotype that so many minorities face, and serve as a role model for young people who strive to succeed academically and professionally."

## SROP Partnership

NEIU McNair Staff established a link to the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Last November, **Francisco Piña**, SROP Recruitment Coordinator, met with Scholars and in the following weeks, Scholars **Martha Flores**, **Gwendolyn Austin**, **Maria Chavez** and **Alex Delgado** were accepted as SROP participants for Summer 2007. SROP was established in 1986 by the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC). CIC is an academic consortium whose participants include the Big Ten schools and the University of Chicago.

## McNair's Own Lincoln Laureate

McNair Scholar Alvin Raul Cardona, a Communication, Media, and Theater major, was NEIU's recipient of the 2007 Lincoln Laureate Medallion awarded by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois. Alvin earned this recognition because of his academic achievements and for service to his community as a mentor at the Jewish Children's Bureau. Along with a medallion, presented to him by Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne M. Burke, Alvin also received a \$150 endowment, a certificate of recognition, and a paid visit to the Old State Capitol historic site in Springfield.

## New DFI Rep

In November, McNair Academic Skills Specialist **Angela Vidal-Rodriguez** was appointed by then President Salme Steinberg as NEIU institutional representative for the Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Program (DFI). The DFI supports minority graduate students who aspire to academic careers by awarding fellowships of \$12,500 to \$17,500 annually. NEIU Senior Executive Director of Affirmative Action and Institutional Outreach Initiatives and DFI Board Member **Dr. Santos Rivera**, and McNair Program Director **Dr. Kim Sanborn** agree that housing DFI representation with McNair is a good fit for both programs.

## TRIO Alumni

The **Council for Opportunity in Education** (COE) works with colleges, universities, and agencies that host TRIO programs to help low-income Americans enter and complete college. Its mission is to advance and defend the ideal of equal educational opportunity in postsecondary education. The **TRIO Alumni Society**, a division of COE, is open to past participants of TRIO programs: Educational Opportunity Centers, Ronald E. McNair Programs, Student Support Services, Talent Search and Upward Bound. The Society provides a forum for TRIO Alumni to exchange ideas and career information.

**TRIOWorks** is an initiative aimed at increasing awareness of the effectiveness of TRIO programs in serving the needs of low-income students. TRIOWorks will compile data (from alumni survey responses) and profile TRIO alumni to demonstrate to the public that TRIO is one of the most historically successful federal programs specifically designed to advance equal educational opportunity and to promote diversity in America's colleges and universities. This information will be available to the public, including Members of Congress, other policy-makers, opinion leaders, and members of the press. The **TRIOWorks** Alumni Survey can be found at <http://www.coenet.us>.

*Source: COE website.*

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