We are pleased to announce that McNair Scholar Rebecca Carey—a junior Psychology and Chinese double-major from Georgetown, TX—has been selected to receive a Mach Fellowship! Trinity University academic departments were invited to nominate only one candidate each based on the consensus of the departmental faculty. Dr. Carol Yoder, Professor and Chair of the Psychology Department at Trinity, submitted Rebecca’s nomination.

Mach Fellowships come from an endowment created by the family of Steven Mach (Trinity class of 1992; 2002 Alumni Board President) to provide funding to rising seniors for use in research or scholarly activity during their senior year.

Last year, Trinity awarded a total of $15,000 in Mach Research Fellowships to rising seniors. The award amount varies from $1000-$2000, which is not a stipend, but may be used in support for supplies or travel. Rebecca’s award totals $1200, which will be a nice addition to her research budget!

Rebecca will be recognized at the Honor Awards Convocation on April 2, 2011 in the Parker Chapel on Trinity’s campus. Congratulations, Rebecca!

 Returning Scholars were welcomed back to school with a kick-off event at Spaghetti Warehouse on January 12, 2011. The spring semester always promises to be jam-packed with events of all sorts, and this year is no different. The Welcome Back Meeting was a great opportunity to discuss the calendar of events and get Scholars excited about the upcoming semester, which is full of cultural events, exciting lectures, and other scholarly activities.

The highlight of the meeting was the keynote address given by McNair alumnus Daniel Large (May 2009). He focused his talk on the wonderful opportunities the McNair Program has opened up for him over the past several years, and what important weight being a McNair Scholar carries with it. He also advised our current Scholars to think about resiliency and the various ways one might turn adversity into opportunity. Danny is currently working as a Study Coordinator with the South Texas Psychiatric Genetics Research Center, hoping to gain critical research experience before applying to graduate programs in Clinical Psychology.

This is the time of year when the present and future of the McNair Scholars Program come into sharp focus. I’m reminded of the closing lines from William Carlos Williams’s 1923 “Spring and All”: “the profound change / has come upon them: rooted they / grip down and begin to awaken.” Williams spoke of vegetable life after a long, cold winter, but he may well have been thinking about our Scholars.

Our Senior-level Scholars are planning on the next phase of academic life, pursuing graduate studies in fields as varied as sociology or medicine at universities as diverse as the University of Chicago or Syracuse University or The University of Texas at Austin. All of us who know them are extraordinarily proud of how far they have come at this early stage of their careers. Rooted in the best of the liberal arts tradition and with impressive research credentials already in place, their scholarly awakening has only just begun.

Our Sophomore- and Junior-level Scholars are preparing for the exciting rigor of research—exploring topics ranging from evaluation of machineries’ ability to track osteoporosis to photography treating the subject of fixed gear bicycle culture—under the guidance of our talented faculty. The Summer Research Experience lies at the heart of the Program; it provides a close-up view of path-breaking research and academic life.

And soon we will welcome a new crop of Scholars who will take part in Program tutorials starting in the fall semester. They were chosen from the largest applicant pool in Program history—the largest by a wide margin—and they can already boast of profound support from Trinity faculty and staff.

On behalf of the entire McNair Scholars Program staff, thank you for making this present and this future possible.
Traditionaly, junior Scholars enrolled in the GNED 3110 McNair course participate in a group graduate school visit during the spring semester. This year, 7 Scholars visited The University of North Texas (UNT) in Denton, and 3 of those Scholars also visited The University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) in Fort Worth.

Dr. James Meernik, Acting Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School at UNT, welcomed the group. Then they explored the benefits of the McNair Program and discussed their summer research plans with Dr. John Ishiyama, Professor of Political Science at UNT and former McNair Director at Truman State University. After a campus tour, Scholars strolled the Denton town square, where they enjoyed dinner at Sweetwater Grill and dessert at Beth Marie's Old Fashioned Ice Cream.

The second day included information on admissions and financial aid, departmental visits, talks with faculty of interest, and meeting the McNair staff at both UNT and UNTHSC. Dr. Wilson Terrell, Jr., GNED 3110 Tutorial Faculty, supervised 4 Scholars’ visits to the departments of Electrical Engineering, Psychology, and Criminal Justice at UNT, while Teresa York, Assistant Director, oversaw visits to the department of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at UNTHSC.

On November 20, 2010, Dr. Wilson Terrell, Jr., McNair Tutorial Faculty, took Scholars Victoria Gbenjo, Clarissa Terrell, Jackie Arevalo, and Laura Sandling on a unique cultural trip. The group visited the Institute of Texan Cultures (ITC) in downtown San Antonio to view “Buffalo Soldiers: Discovering Heritage on the Texas Frontier.” Dr. John Davis, interim director of the ITC, led the group not only a tour of the Buffalo Soldiers exhibit, but also the main exhibit hall and some behind-the-scenes areas at the ITC. During the tour, Dr. Davis explained what he and other curators do at the Institute of Texan Cultures with a view to exposing the Scholars to careers that require a Ph.D. but lie outside a traditional teaching job.

The unique perspective provided by a personalized tour was very much appreciated by our Scholars. Victoria Gbenjo, a sophomore Scholar, said, “It was pretty awesome that we got to see the basement where offices were and where the exhibits are set up.” Senior Clarissa Terrell added, “I liked that there were a variety of exhibits to experience,” including a play exhibit with life-size games like dominoes, Foosball, billiards, and human bowling. “It was a really exciting exhibit.”

Clarissa explained the Buffalo Soldiers exhibit included old uniforms, equipment, and weaponry, as well as a short video with an actor giving the experience of a specific soldier. There were also first-hand accounts of what life was like during the time the Buffalo Soldiers were in their prime. Victoria added, “It was also interesting that the buffalo soldiers were so named because of their hair.”

Dr. Terrell, who had also toured the exhibit with his wife the week before, wrote, “The Buffalo Soldier exhibit was wonderful. No words could describe the experience and the pride in seeing African-Americans displayed in such a honorable light.” He further confirmed the Scholars really enjoyed the event. Clarissa noted, “I would definitely recommend this event to history buffs or anyone interested in how museums operate.”
FALL 2010-SPRING 2011 CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE & PRESENTATIONS

Rebecca Carey
Society for Personality and Social Psychology 12th Annual Meeting
“Motivation and Prospects of Self-Concept Change Affect Desire to Form Friendships”
January 27-29, 2011 San Antonio, TX

Stephanie Croatt
Society for American Archaeology 76th Annual Meeting
“Social Strands: Dyadic Relationships as Means of Integration for Lebanese Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Early 20th Century Yucatan, Mexico”
March 30- April 3, 2011 Sacramento, CA

Trinity University Sociology Department
“An Assessment of Hispanic Portrayal in Children’s Literature”
December 7, 2010 San Antonio, TX

Mellissa Delcont
Society for Neuroscience 40th Annual Meeting
“The Effects of Androgens and Estrogen-induced Protective Factors on Dopamine Neurons in a Parkinson’s Disease Model”
November 13-17, 2010 San Diego, CA

Behavior, Biology and Chemistry: Translational Research in Addiction
March 5-6, 2011 San Antonio, TX

Victoria Gbenjo
Southern Black Student Leadership Conference
January 20-23, 2011 College Station, TX

Samantha Gonzalez
Southern Black Student Leadership Conference
January 20-23, 2011 College Station, TX

Peggy Guo
University of the Incarnate Word South TX Regional McNair Conference
“Discovery of Drugs to Compliment the Epigenetic Effect of Decitabine: Initial Studies”
October 2-3, 2011 San Antonio, TX

Reuben Lucas, Jr.
Southern Black Student Leadership Conference
January 20-23, 2011 College Station, TX

Clarissa Terrell
University of the Incarnate Word South TX Regional McNair Conference
“Verb Acquisition in Early Childhood”
October 2-3, 2011 San Antonio, TX

Jonathan Trejo
Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students
“Effects of the Geographical Distribution of Chain Grocers on Health in Tarrant County”
November 9-12, 2011 Charlotte, NC

Kristine Yi
Trinity University Sociology Department
“Motherly Love: Medical Decision-Making and Parent/Young Adult Relationships”
December 7, 2010 San Antonio, TX
SPRING RESEARCH BANQUET AND SENIOR RECOGNITION

As May approaches our sophomore and junior Scholars are gearing up for the 2011 Summer Research Experience (SRE), while our senior Scholars are preparing for graduation and finalizing their post-baccalaureate plans. The Spring Research Banquet and Senior Recognition is the perfect opportunity to preview the forthcoming SRE projects and highlight all of the amazing accomplishments of our graduating seniors. In keeping with tradition, this year’s banquet will be emceed by Dr. Kelly Lyons, outgoing McNair Tutorial Faculty (2008-2011). Dr. Claudia Scholz, Research Programs Coordinator at Trinity, will also provide a keynote address giving accolades to our seniors and touting the extreme importance of research to entice our summer interns.

MLK COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE

Scholars Aimee Vidaurri (junior), Kristine Yi (junior), Jacqueline Arevalo (senior), and Christina Cooney (sophomore) are pictured here with Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, who delivered the commemorative lecture for the MLK activities taking place on the Trinity campus in January. Thanks to Dr. Wilson Terrell, Jr., McNair Tutorial Faculty, and Ms. Soi Inthavong, Campus and Community Involvement (CCI) Coordinator, for arranging such a special treat for our Scholars!

A TEXAN IN NEW YORK

Trinity McNair alumnus Nathan Tovar (December 2009) has been able to “balance becoming a New Yorker and remaining a tourist” since he started the MA program in American Studies at Columbia University last spring. Although graduate school has kept him incredibly busy, he has still found time to thoroughly enjoy the East Coast. In addition to exploring Salem, Massachusetts and attending the tree lighting at Rockefeller Center, Nathan just recently happened upon the Dr. Ronald McNair Park in Brooklyn. Thanks for sharing your travels, Nathan!

SCHOLARS GET WICKED!

Teresa York, Assistant Director, took 13 enthusiastic Scholars to see Wicked on March 3, 2011. Wicked was playing at the Majestic Theater in downtown San Antonio. For many Scholars, it was their first time to experience the beauty of the historic theater, recognized as one of the most ornate buildings in the country. Although several Scholars had seen the musical before, for others it was the first viewing of the show declared by Entertainment Weekly as “the best musical of the decade.” Everyone’s excitement to see the show was over-whelming and a good time was definitely had by all!