

# Research@CMU

Promoting Scholarship and Creative Work Throughout the University

Volume 1, Issue 4, October 14, 2011



## News from the Hedge

Last week I had the pleasure of attending two sets of student presentations; one was some power-point enhanced talks by some of the undergraduate students in the Ronald McNair Scholars Program and the other was a poster session of both graduate and undergraduate students involved in the Science of Advanced Materials doctoral program. The presentations of the students were uniformly excellent and showed the sure guiding hands of their faculty mentors. The quality of the work made me proud to be at CMU. This issue No. 4 of [Research@CMU](#) I am continuing to hit on our theme of the importance and value of engaging undergraduate students in scholarly, research and creative work. The main feature story describes some of the excellent work of the faculty, staff and students who have been involved in the McNair program over a decade, with a spotlight on the dynamic current director, Lynn Curry.

We are also advertising the availability of undergraduate student financial support of various sorts through ORSP. I want to re-emphasize the absolutely crucial role faculty members play in encouraging undergraduates to access these funds and in serving as mentors for those students who chose to carry out projects with them. I submit that few activities are as mind opening for a student as carrying out an independent research project with a faculty member!

**Jim Hageman**

## Upcoming Events

### ***Monday, October 17***

#### **Undergraduate Research & Creative Endeavors Grants Due**

Submit to ORSP, Foust 251  
by 5:00 p.m.

### ***Wednesday, October 19***

#### **(FRCE) Faculty Research & Creative Endeavors Applications Due for Nov. 2 Committee Meeting**

Submit to ORSP, Foust 251  
by 5:00 p.m.

### **Office of Research and Sponsored Programs**

ORSP@cmich.edu

251 Foust Hall  
Central Michigan University  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48859



## McNair Grows Confidence In Young Scholars

One of the most important things we do in the McNair program is to grow confidence in each of our scholars in pursuing and achieving their Ph.D. We work with students in all areas which I think is significant. This means that we are increasing the diversity of individuals who will ultimately solve societal problems and challenges. We work with first generation college students, low income students and underrepresented students and these students are going on, achieving their master's degrees, and many, their Ph.D.'s. These students will become leaders in their fields and come up with answers to many pressing questions of our time.

These same students typically come in the door not knowing how to accomplish such a goal. Many haven't even considered a Ph.D. Most don't yet have a belief in themselves that they could achieve this level of training and education. McNair scholars conduct original research and grow their skills in writing and communication; they develop the confidence required to go after and get funded at top graduate programs around the country. Simply put, McNair scholars develop the mindset of a graduate student, while still an undergrad.

Right now our scholars are preparing presentations for national meetings and working on their applications for graduate school; some are getting ready to visit their top-choice programs. Two of our scholars just returned from a highly selective graduate school visitation program at the University of Rochester. Both are highly encouraged by their experience and hope to gain entry into Ph.D. programs in English and Developmental Psychology. These students were selected for such an opportunity because they are McNair scholars.

Every year, I have the great privilege of witnessing the evolution of a group of new students. The scholars amaze me with their great curiosity, their willingness to work hard, their tenacity for finding truth (both personally and professionally) and with their exceptional ability to open themselves to new things and to each other. Each scholar departs from CMU knowing they have a mission to fulfill. Their visions range from becoming a noted chemist to an expert on rare books to an effective higher education administrator. The common thread among McNair scholars is their resolve and dedication toward furthering their education. To date, CMU has serviced 138 McNair scholars. Most have achieved their master's de-

gree and many are currently enrolled in master's programs with the intent of continuing on for their Ph.D. To date, two of our McNair scholars have achieved their Ph.D.'s (Chemistry at Rice University and Physiology at University of Iowa) and we have 24 additional scholars currently enrolled in Ph.D. programs around the country including institutions such as Indiana University, University of Southern California, Boston University, University of Florida, Vanderbilt University, University of Alabama, Howard University and University of North Carolina to name a few. We anticipate producing one or more new Ph.D.'s each year in the foreseeable future. The truth is we can't wait to hear our students' stories in years to come and find out exactly how each scholar will fulfill *their* McNair mission.

Lynn Curry has been working with the McNair Scholars Program at CMU since 2003 and is responsible for securing continued funding for the grant. Lynn is a first generation college student herself and has a interdisciplinary background in international affairs and community development and has over ten years of experience working in higher education. Lynn grew up in Milwaukee and did her undergraduate work at St. Norbert College, near Green Bay. She completed her graduate work at Ohio University. Lynn finds great joy and satisfaction in working with McNair scholars and helping them to craft and realize their vision of furthering their education and achieving an advanced degree.

### Post Award Tip #4

Are you hiring hourly student employees through your grant or contract? If so, it is important to know that sometimes FICA (Social Security) may be charged on their wages. FICA is a percent of wage withheld and placed in the government's Social Security Trust Fund. FICA is calculated at 7.65% of wages earned. FICA expenses will be charged to your grant or contract, along with the student wages.

Students enrolled at least half time during the period in which they are working will not have FICA withheld. In the summer, because students are usually not enrolled half-time and do not need to be in order to be student employees, FICA charges will be made on their wages earned during those months.

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Technical Composer: Trenton Mitchell

## Undergraduate Student Funding Opportunities

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provides financial support for undergraduate students involved in research and creative endeavors. Funding is available for:

Undergraduate Presentation Grants (up to \$350), rolling application deadline

Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors Grants (up to \$500), application deadlines October 17, 2011 and February 13, 2012

Undergraduate Summer Scholars (up to \$3,500), application deadline February 13, 2012

For additional information and application materials for these funding programs please visit the ORSP website at: <http://www.orsp.cmich.edu/research/studentResources/studentFunding/undergraduate/>

### Pre-Award Tip #1

NSF Update

If you have an NSF account, NSF is requiring that you log into your account and Update the "Edit Principal Investigator's (PI) Information" screen. If you need assistance, please contact ORSP at X6777.