

# PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal

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Millenium*

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## Front Matter Volume 4, 2010

McNair Scholars Program  
*Portland State University*

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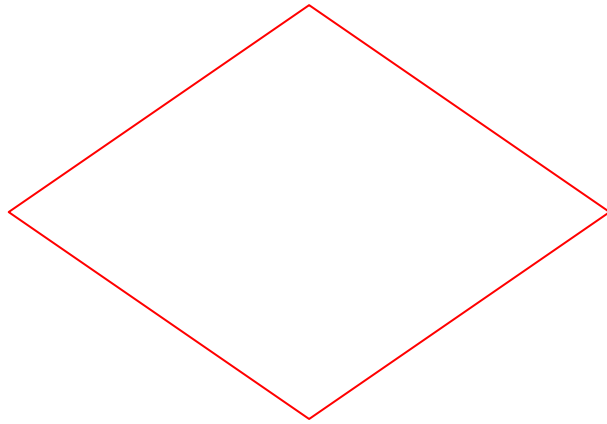
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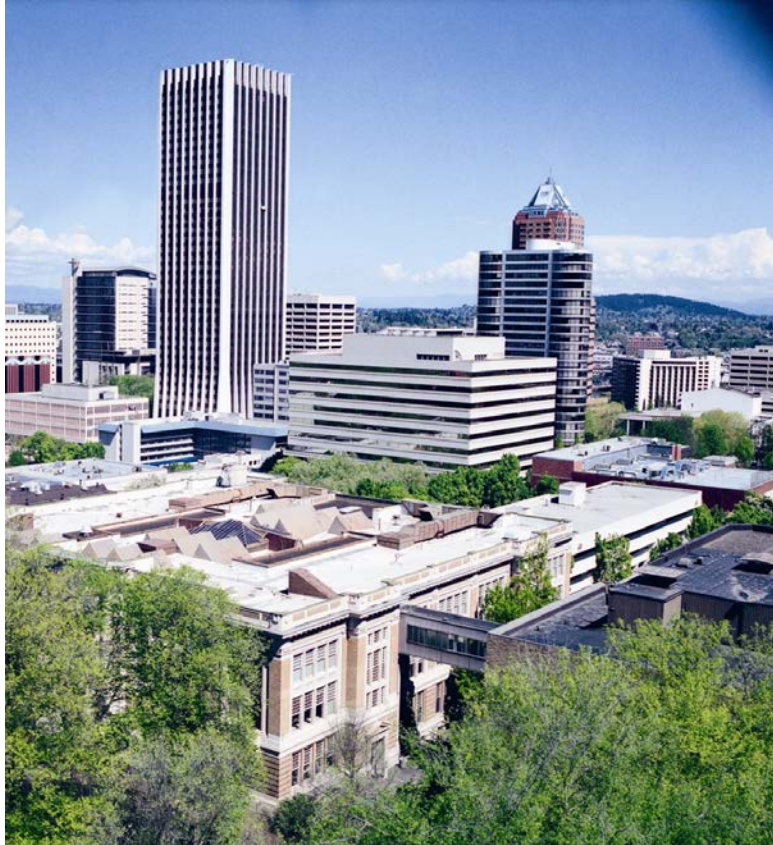
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# ADAPTATIONS

**MINDFUL LIVING IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM**

**2010 McNair Scholars Online Journal**



The Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program at Portland State University (PSU) works with motivated and talented undergraduates who want to pursue PhDs. It introduces juniors and seniors who are first-generation and low-income, and/or members of under-represented groups to academic research and to effective strategies for getting into and graduating from PhD programs.

The McNair Scholars Program has academic-year activities and a full-time summer research internship. Scholars take academic and skills-building seminars and workshops during the year, and each scholar works closely with a faculty mentor on original research in the summer. Scholars present their research findings at the McNair Summer Symposium and at other conferences, and are encouraged to publish their papers in the McNair Journal and other scholarly publications.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program was established in 1986 by the U.S. Department of Education and named in honor of Challenger Space Shuttle astronaut

Dr. Ronald E. McNair. The program, which is in its seventh year on campus, is funded by a \$924,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education and institutional cost-share funds.

The McNair Scholars Program's student-centered approach relies heavily on faculty and university commitment. Activities and opportunities provided by the program focus on building a positive academic community for the scholars while they are undergraduates at PSU.

## Ronald E. McNair



Ronald Erwin McNair was born October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina. While in junior high school, Dr. McNair was inspired to work hard and persevere in his studies by his family and by a teacher who recognized his scientific potential and believed in him. Dr. McNair graduated as valedictorian from Carver High School in 1967. In 1971, he graduated magna cum laude and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from North Carolina A&T State University (Greensboro). Dr. McNair then enrolled in the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976, at the age of 26, he earned his Ph.D. in laser physics.

His dissertation was titled, "Energy Absorption and Vibrational Heating in Molecules Following Intense Laser Excitation." Dr. McNair was presented an honorary doctorate of Laws from North Carolina A&T State University in 1978, an honorary doctorate of Science from Morris College in 1980, and an honorary doctorate of science from the University of South Carolina in 1984.

While working as a staff physicist with Hughes Research Laboratory, Dr. McNair soon became a recognized expert in laser physics. His many distinctions include being a Presidential Scholar (1971-74), a Ford Foundation Fellow (1971-74), a National Fellowship Fund Fellow (1974-75), and a NATO Fellow (1975). He was also a sixth degree black belt in karate and an accomplished saxophonist. Because of his many accomplishments, he was selected by NASA for the space shuttle program in 1978. His first space shuttle mission launched successfully from Kennedy Space Center on February 3, 1984. Dr. Ronald E. McNair was the second African American to fly in space. Two years later he was selected to serve as mission specialist aboard the ill-fated U.S. Challenger space shuttle. He was killed instantly when the Challenger exploded one minute, thirteen seconds after it was launched. Dr. McNair was posthumously awarded the

Congressional Space Medal of Honor. After his death in the Challenger Space Shuttle accident on January 28, 1986, members of Congress provided funding for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Their goal was to encourage low-income and first-generation college students, and students from historically underrepresented ethnic groups to expand their educational opportunities by enrolling in a Ph.D. program and ultimately pursue an academic career. This program is dedicated to the high standards of achievement inspired by Dr. McNair's life.

Source: [mcnairscholars.com](http://mcnairscholars.com)

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Wes Anderson

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Grayce Bentley

- Major: Liberal Studies
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- Project Title: “Learning for Life: Identity and Achievement”



Rebecca X. Casanova

- Major: Community Health Education
- Mentor: Siobhan C. Maty, PhD
- Project Title: “Strength in Numbers? Wisdom about Health and Weight from Lesbians in Portland, Oregon “

Nathania Cha

- Major: Applied Linguistics
- Mentor: Martha Balshem, PhD
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Ashley Cunningham

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- Mentor: Chris Carey, PhD, JD
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Valerie K. DePan

- Major: Community Development/Housing and Economic Development Graduate Certificate in Real Estate
- Mentor: Gerard C.S. Mildner, PhD
- Project Title: “Community Reinvestment Act of 1977: Revisited”

Cynthia Edison

- Major: Women’s Studies/Liberal Arts
- Mentor: Ann Mussey, PhD
- Project Title: “Lakota w ne heh ya pi” (Lakota women say)

Sarah Egan

- Majors: Sociology and Social Science
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Gene Estrada

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Stephanie Haas

- Major: Sociology/Women Studies
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Jesse Iford

- Major: History
- Mentor: Richard Beyler, PhD
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Emmalee McDonald

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- Mentor: Ellen Bassett, PhD
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Sergey Ovchinnikov

- Major: Molecular Biology
- Mentor: Mark Fishbein, PhD
- Project Title: "Short Read Assembly Pipeline Using Scripted Filters, De Novo Assembly and Manual Extension of Terminated Contigs"

Travis Peterson

- Major: Environmental Studies
- Mentor: Yangdong Pan, PhD
- Project Title: "The Effects of a Road Culvert on the Benthic Macroinvertebrate Community in a Wadeable Lotic Ecosystem"

Melissa Shaquid Pirie

- Major: Geography
- Mentor: Hunter Shobe, PhD
- Project Title: “Portland’s Peri-Urban Rural Fringe: A Study of Farm production”

William Reynaga

- Major: Political Science
- Mentor: Richard Clucas, PhD
- Project Title: “Military Enlistments and the Correlation with the Recession”

Angela L. Robinson

- Majors: Business Management and Women’s Studies
- Mentor: Priya Kandaswamy, PhD
- Project Title: “LGBTQ Pacific Islanders Negotiating Multiple Identities”

Michael Razavi

- Major: Community Development
- Mentors: Eric Martin M.A.C; Jeff Morotta PhD
- Project Title: “Tobacco, Alcohol, and Gambling Youth Oriented Advertising in Retail Outlets: Results of a Citywide Survey in the Portland Metropolitan Area”

Javier Spyker

- Major: Geography
- Mentor: Thomas Harvey, PhD
- Project Title: “Sustainable Rural Landscapes in the Face of an Expanding Urban Growth Boundary (UGB): How does Farm Size and Proximity to the UGB Affect Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Washington County?”

Jonette Swanson

- Major: Art History
- Mentor: Anne McClanan, PhD
- Project Title: “Teen Mentorship and Education Collaborations with Art Museums”

Jodi Lee Swartfager

- Major: Community Development
- Mentor: Barry Messer, PhD
- Project Title: “Rules of the Road: An Analysis of Road Users’ Perceptions about Urban Traffic Scenarios”

Alexis Thompson

- Major: Environmental Science
- Mentor: Richard White, PhD
- Project Title: “Perceived Benefits of an ICDNGO”

Michael Tonn

- Major: Political Science
- Mentor: David Kinsella, PhD
- Project Title: “Misguided Men: International Law and the Closing of Guantanamo”

Jason M. White

- Major: Psychology
- Mentor: Peter Collier, PhD
- Project Title: “Aiming High: Explorations into About-to-Graduate Undergraduates’ Understandings of the Graduate Student”

Denissia Withers

- Major: Liberal Studies
- Mentor: Lisa H. Weasel, PhD
- Project Title: “Community Learning Garden Programs in the Portland Area: How do Learning Gardens Help Low-Income Families Access Fresh Locally-Grown Foods?”

# **Editorial Board**

## **Editorial Board**

**Toeutu Faaleava**, Director, McNair Scholars Program

**Jolina Kwong**, Program Coordinator

**Tyanne Conner**, Graduate Assistant

**Foday Darboe**, Graduate Assistant

**Holly Hernandez**, Graduate Assistant