

THE CHALLENGER

UPDATED MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM NEWS

A NOTE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dr. Marcus L. Arrington



Greetings McNair family and friends! It's with great joy that I share words that may inspire, confirm, challenge, or provoke deeper reflection. In the past two months, I've had the pleasure of attending two TRIO Priority Trainings for persons who are new in their McNair Director roles. The first training was in Portland, Oregon. The second training was in Austin, Texas. I was in two different regions of the United States, at two different times. I was among different facilitators and TRIO professionals. Yet, I had a similar experience each time. Out of all the training participants, I was the lone McNair leader. When it was time to participate in group sessions with program colleagues, I had no peers to link with. Of course, the training facilitators made sure that I had support, so I wasn't technically alone. But, I felt alone. Despite rooms full of people and the bustle associated with typical professional development sessions, I was fearful that somehow my experience would be diminished. I felt immured in a cone of silence. I observed the engagement that surrounded me, and I had to make a choice. I could allow my "singleness" to distract me from completing the learning activities that I'd been assigned. Or, I could persist through the experience and maximize the time and resources that were made available. I chose the latter.

What could have been several days of dejection or frustration became several days of positive imagining and professional enlargement. I left each training feeling confident that I'd been equipped with knowledge and tools that will strengthen my ability to create conditions for student academic and social success as McNair Program Coordinator at Marquette University. I felt good because I kept my "eye on the prize". I was aplomb. I completed the assignment.

Some may read the account of my recent travels and be unmoved. That's fine. However, I'm certain that others can identify, particularly those who are current and past McNair participants. Being a first-generation student or hailing from groups underrepresented in graduate school and certain industries can be frighteningly lonely. You may literally be the only person in the room, program, or department with your ethnic heritage, gender, or class status. You may be tempted with frustration and angst. Thoughts to fight or flee may swirl in your head. Be encouraged! Feelings don't necessarily determine reality. You may be different, but you're not alone. Rather than view the situation from a deficit perspective, consider the value that you add. Your presence increases the wealth of the room. Your value strengthens the group. My presence at those trainings mattered because it helped to complete the TRIO picture. Those who weren't as familiar with McNair could ask me questions that those unfamiliar with McNair couldn't answer. In the end, persistence helps you and others. Persistence upgrades community.

May my brief story encourage you to conquer fears of being the "only one". May you may be inspired to soar over obstacles and explore new frontiers of academic and professional possibilities.

ABOUT MCNAIR

Physicist and NASA astronaut, Ronald E. McNair, tragically passed away at 35 during the Space Shuttle Challenger's launch. In tribute to his commitment to academic excellence, the McNair Scholars program, along with this newsletter, was established. With over 200 programs nationwide, it specifically supports first-generation college students from economically disadvantaged or minority backgrounds. The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is geared towards preparing eligible students for graduate school.



Ronald E. McNair

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY MCNAIR PROGRAM



2023 cohort; University of Minnesota visit

During the academic year, students attend monthly seminars, meet visiting scholars, and participate in student and professional conferences. During the summer, McNair students participate in the Summer Research Institute, a paid research internship that provides an in-depth research experience. The summer also includes opportunities for working one-on-one with a faculty mentor, learning how to apply to graduate school, and the opportunity to network with other undergraduates from across the nation.

To date, more than fifty (50) MU-McNair Scholars have earned their PhDs. Forty-four (44) MU McNair Scholars have earned other doctoral-level or professional degrees. Two hundred thirty-three (233) MU McNair Scholars have graduated with master's degrees.

WELCOME THE 2024 COHORT



Brenda Sanchez Tiscareno
Information systems &
Marketing



Tionna Gillespie
Psychology & Criminology



Mario Lopez Saldana
Criminology & Law Studies



Choukri Omar
Psychology



Samantha Arellano
Criminology & Law Studies



Payton Robinson
Biomedical Sciences



Liliana Caban
Psychology



Aaron Cung
Theology & Philosophy



Joseph Thawng
Biomedical Sciences



Jayna Hogan-White
Psychology



Anaale Camynta-Baezie
Psychology



Emely Zavaleta Varela
Psychology

WELCOME THE 2024 COHORT



Allison Lara-Osorio
Criminology and Law Studies



Van Thang
Political Science &
International Affairs



Gabriella Ingram
Biomedical Science



Keyandre Thompson
Psychology



Jaleen Mays
Corporate Communication



Kumassi Browne
Environmental Science



Deyana Jaraba
Sophomore

“Anything you don’t know is going to be hard at first, but if you stay the course, put the time and effort in, it will become seamless eventually.”
— Jeanette Epps

The first Black woman astronaut to visit the International Space Station

TRIO DAY

EXCELLENCE RECOGNIZED: HONORS AWARD RECIPIENTS

On February 24th, the Marquette University Educational Opportunity Program celebrated TRIO Day along with numerous colleges and universities nationwide. It's an annual celebration. TRIO is the name for a group of federally funded student outreach and support programs that are designed to provide critical services to individuals from historically disadvantaged communities. The original programs are Upward Bound (1964), Talent Search (1965), and Student Support Services (1968). The three programs together formed, TRIO. Later, more programs were added to the TRIO roster including: Education Opportunity Center (1972), Veterans Upward Bound (1972), Training Grants (1976), Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program (1986), and Upward Bound Math & Science (1990). Marquette University has been home to TRIO since 1969 thanks to the leadership of Dr. Arnold Mitchem, the founder of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). The EOP staff is eager to transfer the knowledge of TRIO origins to all current pre-college and college division participants. We all "stand on the shoulders of giants".

EACH YEAR, THE VARIOUS TRIO PROGRAMS AT MARQUETTE RECOGNIZE AT LEAST TWO SCHOLARS FOR REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT, AND FERVENT PARTICIPATION. THIS YEAR, THE MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM RECOGNIZED JOSHUA WILDER, A JUNIOR MAJORING IN PSYCHOLOGY AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND ANA CARDENAS MANRIQUE, A GRADUATING SENIOR MAJORING IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PRE-LAW STUDIES. KUDOS TO JOSHUA AND ANA!

Ana Cardenas Manrique is a senior anticipating to graduate from Marquette University with a Bachelor's in Political Science and Peace Studies with a minor in Criminology and Law Studies, and Law and Society in May of 2024. She was accepted to a JD program at The George Washington University Law School, which she will be attending in the Fall of 2024. Before starting her career in politics, she plans to practice International Human Rights Law. During the summer of 2023, she was mentored by Dr. Philip Rocco and studied "*Labor Unions and Advocacy Organizations Assisting Mexican Migrant Workers in Wisconsin Dairy Industry*". Additionally, she was on the dean's list for seven consecutive semesters, she is a recipient of the Ignatian Distinction Scholarship and the Pere Marquette Scholarship. She is a member of Alpha Sigma Nu and Pi Sigma Alpha honors societies. Lastly, Ana says that the McNair Scholars program has helped her sharpen her research skills, pushed her out of her comfort zone, and encouraged her to believe in herself and her abilities within higher education and academia.



Josh Wilder is a Junior double majoring in cognitive science and psychology with a minor in mathematics. He anticipates graduating in May of 2025 and plans to attend a postbaccalaureate program. During the summer of 2023, he researched *The Relationship Between Implicit Bias and Emotional Appraisal of Outgroup and Ingroup Members* under the guidance of Dr. Jacklynn Fitzgerald. During the month of April, he will be presenting his research at the Midwestern Psychological Association conference. Additionally, he has been on the Dean's list every semester of his undergraduate career. He has been selected as a research fellow in the Medical College of Wisconsin's (MCW) Diversity Health-Related Summer Research. During the summer research program, he will be under the guidance of MCW faculty. Josh says the McNair program introduced him to the research process and allowed him to view how research is conducted, and introduced him to a new passion he never knew he had. It also helped prepare him for a career in academia.



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024!

Karen Ayala-Hernandez BS-Bioelectronics

Ashley Benito Lezameta BA-Psychology

Madison Black BA-Psychology

Ana Cardenas Manrique BA-Political Science

Kismat Chahal BA-Psychology

Paulina Cobos BA-Psychology

Mariana Gonzalez-Torres BA-Psychology

Parvathy Nair BS-Interdisciplinary Applied Mathematical Economics

Deondre Reid, Jr. BA-Spanish for the Professions

Sherlean Roberts BA- Political Science and interdisciplinary Peace Studies and
Interdisciplinary International Affairs

Geraldine Ruiz BA-Nursing

Destiny Alvarez BS-Nursing

Abigail Rose BA-Criminology, Law Studies, and Political Science

Jadzia Fitzgerald BA-Social Welfare and Justice

KEEPING UP WITH MCNAIR STUDENTS

Joshua Wilder presented his McNair research project entitled, "In-group vs. Out-group: Appraisal Differences Across Graded Levels of Expressions" at the 96th Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA), on April 18-20, 2024, in Chicago, IL. Josh Wilder was also accepted into The Summer Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR) as a research fellow at the Medical College of Wisconsin and will participate in biomedical research over this summer.

Ashley Benito Lezameta presented her McNair Research project entitled, "Exploring the Effects of Stigma and Cultural Variables in the Hispanic/Latinx Community in Relation to Seeking Mental Health Service" at the 96th Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA), on April 18-20, 2024, in Chicago, IL.

Ana Cardenas Manrique has been accepted into the George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C. She will begin her law journey in Fall 2024.

Sherlean Roberts has been accepted into the University of Iowa PhD program in Political Science. She will begin her journey as a Hawkeye in Fall 2024.

Lizbeth Lopez has been accepted into the Graduate Speech Pathology Program at Marquette University for the 2024-2025 school year.

Alma Aliyah-Tolson won first place for undergraduate poster at the 2024 Wisconsin Psychological Association conference.

Emely Zavaleta Varela has been accepted to the Neuroscience PhD program in Psychology at Marquette University for the 2024-2025 school year.

Deondre Reid has been accepted to the Spanish Master's program at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and will be attending in the fall of 2024



KEEPING UP WITH MCNAIR ALUMNI

Corena Smith was in the 2022 McNair Scholars cohort and is enrolled in a dual-title Philosophy and African American Diaspora Studies doctoral program at Penn State University.

Kathleen Maltese was in the 2022 McNair Scholars cohort and is currently enrolled in the Marquette University Speech Pathology masters program. She is also a graduate assistant for the advance program.

Nicole Abalde was in the 2021 McNair Scholars cohort and is currently working in a Histopathology Lab while also taking prerequisite classes for nursing school.

Kimberly Murillo was in the 2019 McNair Scholars cohort and earned her Masters in Behavioral Analysis from Marquette University. She is currently working as a Behavioral Analyst.

Nora Godoy works as a Placemaking Director at the Milwaukee Harbor District

Moe Han graduated from Midwestern University with a Masters in Biomedical Sciences in 2021 and is currently in medical school

Saul Lopez was in the 2017 McNair Scholars cohort and earned his Masters in 2020. He recently received the Schmitt Fellowship at Marquette University.

J Paul Padilla just earned his PhD in in Rhetoric, Composition, and the Teaching of English from the University of Arizona. Paul is a member of the **1998 McNair cohort**.

**Are you a Marquette McNair
Scholar Program Alumnus?**

Let us know what you've been up
to by filling out this survey



Hey McNair Alumni! We're attempting to build our alumni database, and we need your help! Once McNair, always McNair. We're a family, and we want to remain connected, even after participants graduate. If you are in contact with cohort mates from your time in the Marquette McNair Scholars Program, please encourage them to reach out to us. Additionally, we want to engage McNair alumni in efforts with current McNair participants. We'd love to feature McNair alumni as panelists who can discuss graduate school or navigating life after undergrad. We'd also love to enlist McNair alumni as "brand ambassadors". Help us tell our story. Spread the positive news about the ways the MU-McNair continues to help transform the lives of students who are first-generation or from groups underrepresented in graduate studies. Can't wait to hear from you. Thanks in advance!

MEET THE STAFF

Dr. Marcus L. Arrington – Program Director McNair Scholars

Dr. Marcus L. Arrington is a servant-leader with over 20 years of experience in both ecclesial and academic settings. Dr. Arrington holds earned doctorates from Cardinal Stritch University and Hope Bible Institute & Seminary. His primary research interests include hope theory and critical pedagogy. In addition to leading the McNair Scholars Program at Marquette, Dr. Arrington is a minister, author, loving husband, and father.

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(414) 288-3011

Joia Wesley - Graduate Assistant

Joia Wesley is a fourth-year graduate student in the Clinical Psychology program at Marquette. She is originally from Chicago but has been in Milwaukee since college. She is a first-generation college student who is excited to continue her education. She completed the McNair Scholars program during her second year of college. She uses her experiences as a previous McNair Scholar and now a graduate student to help undergraduates who are interested in graduate school. A helpful tip that she received is to never self-select yourself out of opportunities that you want. It comes with confidence, but the more you lean into your goals, the closer you will get to achieving them.

Contact:

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Contact us

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is housed on the third floor of Coughlin Hall. This is where you'll find our staff offices, student study spaces, computer lab and more resources.

Coughlin Hall, 343
1303 Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.



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Destiny Hill - Graduate Assistant

Destiny Hill is a first-generation first-year graduate student in the Speech-Language Pathology Masters program. She was born and raised in Milwaukee. In addition, she was a McNair Scholar during her undergraduate career and she is excited to give back to the program that supported her. Over the last few years, she has learned to be her authentic self, network with people, and seize every opportunity for growth.

Contact:

Destiny.hill@marquette.edu



Joia Wesley



Destiny Hill