Welcome McNair Scholars 2018-2019

Rosa Borrego-Butler  Louis Chavez  Naila Flores  Megan Greige
Computer Science  Psychology  Biology  Geology

Congratulations McNair 2018-2019 Scholar Graduates

Fall 2018
Kathryn Hamilton
Ruth Younger

Spring 2019
Jessica Barrera
Clay Clarkson
Alisha Cowan
Mariah Clay
Friederike Davis
Kathrin Gibson
Abigail Hernandez
Tony Long
Michael Martinez
Arriana McDonald
Doina Morales
Quynh Chi Quach
Trecia Rodgers
Ashley Rodriguez

Summer 2019
Micah Bachner
TRIO National Day of Service

On Saturday morning, February 23rd, students and staff from the TAMUCC McNair Scholars Program and Student Support Services Programs met to organize and take donations to Izzy’s Pantry and The Ark. The students had been collecting donation items, such as clothes and perishable items, over the previous four weeks and met early Saturday for breakfast before loading up the donations for the trip.

TAMUCC’s TRIO programs were able to collect and donate items ranging from clothing, shoes, and handbags to household necessities. The TRIO Community Service Event gives students the chance to give back to their community by engaging in charitable activities to benefit the public. We thank all the campus for the many donations to make a difference in their community by helping the less fortunate.

McNair Faculty Mentors

Thank you to the following Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi faculty members who support the program by mentoring and directing research. McNair would not be a successful program without their dedication.

College of Science and Engineering
Dr. Mark Besonen
Dr. Eugene Billiot
Dr. Feri Billiot
Dr. Chris Bird
Dr. Gregory Buck
Dr. Kirk Cammarata
Dr. Luis Garcia
Dr. Xavier Gonzales
Dr. James Hogan
Dr. Yuxia Huang
Dr. Scott King
Dr. Chuntao Liu
Dr. Ruby Mehrubeoglu
Dr. Paul Montagna
Dr. Dorina Murgulet
Dr. Valerie Murgulet
Dr. Cosmina Nicula
Dr. Christopher Patrick
Dr. Frank Pezold
Dr. Brandi Reese
Dr. David Portnay
Dr. Alaa Sheeta
Dr. Lee Smee
Dr. Greg Stunz
Dr. Jeffrey Turner
Dr. Benjamin Walton
Dr. Kim Withers
Dr. Ning Zhang

College of Education
Dr. Toyin Ajisafe
Dr. Randy Bonnette
Dr. Donald Melrose
Dr. Daniel Newmire
Dr. Bethanie Fletcher
Dr. Lon Seiger
Dr. Frank Spaniol
Dr. Corinne Valadez
Dr. Heather Webb

College of Business
Dr. Mohan Rao
Dr. Lawrence Smith

College of Nursing
Ms. Carmen Hernandez
Dr. Cathy Miller
Dr. Christina Murphey

College of Liberal Arts
Dr. Isabel Araiza
Dr. Olga Berkout
Dr. Pamela Brouillard
Dr. Lisa Compartini
Dr. Charles Etheridge
Dr. Gina Glanc
Dr. Mark Hartlaub
Dr. Sam Hill
Dr. Amy Houlihan
Dr. Melissa Jarrell
Dr. Daniel Maitland
Dr. Michelle Maresh-Fuehrer
Dr. Pamela Meyer
Dr. Miguel Moreno
Dr. Catherine Quick
Dr. Michael Ramirez
Dr. Phillip Rhoades
Dr. Carey Rote
Dr. Steve Seidel
Dr. Yuliana Zalikman
Dr. Anthony Zoccolillo
The McNair Scholars Program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi hosted McNair Day on April 18 to recognize McNair Scholars that conducted research in the Spring/Summer 2018 in honor of Dr. Ronald E. McNair.

Thirteen McNair Scholars presented the following poster presentations:

- **Mariya Aleksich**: “NMR Investigation and Characterization of Leucine-Based Surfactants Bound to Various Counterions.” Her mentor is Dr. Eugene Billiot.
- **Micah Bachner**: “Using Landmark Morphometrics to Detect Fishery-Induced Evolution in Response to Varying Human Population Density.” His mentor is Dr. Chris Bird.
- **LarReshia Brumfield**: “Reproducibility of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for Characterizing the Virulence Gene vcgC in Known and Unknown Vibrio vulnificus isolates from the Coastal Bend Region of Texas.” Her mentor is Dr. Gregory Buck.
- **Clay Clarkson**: “Quantifying the Relationship between Methane Concentration and mcrA Genes of a Cultured Surface Sediment Methanoblobus spp.” His mentor is Dr. Brandi Reese.
- **Mariah Clay**: “The Relationship between the Convergence, Divergence, Recognition, Tracking Skills Response Time, and Reading Achievement of Elementary School Students.” Her mentor is Dr. Frank Spaniol.
- **Alisha Cowan**: “I Got You Covered: Couple-Serving Biases as Predictors of Relationship Satisfaction.” Her mentor is Dr. Steve Seidel.
- **Andrew Garcia**: “Digital Switchable Magnet as a Power Efficient Alternative for Electromagnets in a Mobile Robotic System.” His mentor is Dr. Ruby Mehrubeoglu.
- **Kathrin Gibson**: “Thinspiration and Fitspiration Effects on Body Satisfaction and Motivation to Diet and Exercise.” Her mentor is Dr. Yuliana Zaikman.
- **Tony Long**: “The Effects of Group Empowerment Drumming on State Anxiety in Selected Populations.” His mentor is Dr. Lon Seliger.
- **Michael Martinez**: “The Effects of Static Magnetic Fields on the Effect in Conductors.” His mentor is Dr. Cosmina Nicula.
- **Arianna McDonald**: “Salivary Cortisol and Testosterone Responses to a Farmers Walk.” Her mentor is Dr. Heather Webb.
- **Doina Morales**: “Image Processing for Mapping of Controlled Game Environment.” Her mentor is Dr. Ruby Mehrubeoglu.
- **Ashley Rodriguez**: “The Reverse Double Standard among Relationships with a Power Disparity.” Her mentor is Dr. Yuliana Zaikman.
Mariya Aleksich
Major: Chemistry
Faculty Mentor: Eugene Billiot, Ph.D.
Research Project: “NMR Investigation and Characterization of Leucine-Based Surfactants Bound to Various Counterions”

Robert Bretzing-Tungate
Major: Marine Biology
Faculty Mentor: David Portnoy, Ph.D.
Research Project: “Misidentification of Marine Organisms by Recreational Anglers/Misidentification using Ineffective Photos”

Alisha Cowan
Major: Psychology
Faculty Mentor: Steve Seidel, Ph.D.
Research Project: “I Got You Covered: Couple-Serving Biases as Predictors of Relationship Satisfaction”

Kathrin Gibson
Major: Psychology
Faculty Mentor: Yuliana Zaikman, Ph.D.
Research Project: “Thinspiration and Fitspiration Effects on Body Satisfaction and Motivation to Diet and Exercise”

Albert Hernandez
Major: Kinesiology
Faculty Mentor: Toyin Ajisafe, Ph.D.
Research Project: His study will aim to compare step count assessed by activity trackers attached to different body locations during different activities in the laboratory environment.

Tony Long
Major: Psychology
Faculty Mentor: Lon Seiger, Ph.D.
Research Project: “The Effects of Group Empowerment Drumming on State Anxiety in Selected Populations”

Yadira Martinez-Gomez
Major: Psychology
Faculty Mentor: Steve Seidel, Ph.D.
Research Project: She plans to investigate whether lateness of a professor to class predicts student perceptions of classroom effectiveness, educational satisfaction, and classroom behavior.
Research Scholars Spring/Summer 2019

Arriana McDonald
Major: Athletic Training
Faculty Mentor: Heather Webb, Ph.D.
Research Project: “Salivary Cortisol and Testosterone Responses to a Farmers Walk”

Quynh Chi Quach
Major: Marketing
Faculty Mentor: Michelle Maresh-Fuehrer, Ph.D.
Research Project: The purpose of her study is to understand how social media plays a role in crisis communication and what organizations should do to have a stronghold of their reputation status when a situation arises on social media.

Cerina Ramirez
Major: Generalist Reading
Faculty Mentor: Bethanie Pletcher, Ph.D.
Research Project: “Primary Grade Teacher Attitudes Toward and Practices of Using E-Readers in the Classroom”

Ashley Rodriguez
Major: Psychology
Faculty Mentor: Yuliana Zaikman, Ph.D.

Rudy Salomon
Major: Electrical Engineering
Faculty Mentor: Luis Garcia, Ph.D.
Research Project: His research project will include the design of UAV’s for quick deployment. His focus is to reduce the wiring systems and set-up time or deployment of UAV’s.

Angelia Val
Major: Biology
Faculty Mentor: Sam Hill, Ph.D.
Research Project: “Meta-Analysis on Atrial Fibrillation Treatment”

Loren Walker
Major: Geology
Faculty Mentor: Dorina Murgulet, Ph.D.
Research Project: Her research project will analyze the current effects of precipitation on shallow aquifer in the Texas Coastal Region and weigh the results against the predictions for the future climate in this region.
Clay Clarkson

“Quantifying the Relationship Between Methane Concentration and mcrA Genes of a Cultured Surface Sediment Methanolobus spp”

Faculty Mentor: Brandi K. Reese, Ph.D. Assistant Professor; Department of Life Science
- 2019 Triple Beta South Central Regional Conference, Mt. Lebanon Encampment, Cedar Hill, TX; April 2019

Kathrin Gibson

“Thinspiration and Fitspiration Effects on Body Satisfaction and Motivation to Diet and Exercise”

Faculty Mentor: Yuliana Zaikman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor; Department of Psychology
- 2019 Southwestern Psychological Association Convention, Albuquerque, NM; April 2019

Alisha Cowan

“I Got You Covered: Couple-Serving Biases as Predictors of Relationship Satisfaction”

Faculty Mentor: Steve Seidel, Ph.D. Professor; Department of Psychology
- 2019 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), Portland, OR; February 2019

Arriana McDonald

“Salivary Cortisol and Testosterone Responses to a Farmers Walk”

Faculty Mentor: Heather Webb, Ph.D., Associate Professor; Department of Kinesiology
- 2019 TACSM Annual Meeting, Fort Worth, TX; February 2019

Ashley Rodriguez

“The Reverse Double Standard Among Relationships with a Power Disparity”

Faculty Mentor: Yuliana Zaikman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor; Department of Psychology
- 2019 Southwestern Psychological Association Convention, Albuquerque, NM; April 2019
20th Annual McNair Scholars Undergraduate National Research Conference

Five McNair Scholars representing Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi presented at the 20th Annual McNair Scholars Undergraduate National Research Conference held March 14-17 at the University of Maryland.

The Texas A&M-Corpus Christi students who presented their research were:

LarReshia Brumfield – “Reproducibility of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for Characterizing the Virulence Gene vcgC in Known and Unknown Vibrio vulnificus Isolates from the Coastal Bend Region of Texas.” Her faculty mentor is Dr. Gregory Buck.

Mariah Clay – “The Relationship Between Convergence, Divergence, Recognition, Tracking Skills Response Time, and Reading Achievement of Elementary School Students.” Her faculty mentor is Dr. Frank Spaniol.

Andrew Garcia – “Digital Switchable Magnet as a Power-Efficient Alternative for Electromagnets in a Mobile Robotic System.” His faculty mentor is Dr. Ruby Mehrubeoglu.

Tony Long – “The Effects of Group Empowerment Drumming on State Anxiety in Selected Populations.” His faculty mentor is Dr. Lon Seiger.

Doina Morales – “Image Processing for Mapping of Controlled Game Environment.” Her faculty mentor is Dr. Ruby Mehrubeoglu.

Scholar Graduates: Where are they Headed?

We would like to congratulate the 2018-2019 cohort of graduate scholars. They have done many wonderful things during their time at TAMUCC and are representing the TAMUCC McNair Scholars Program well in their respective graduate programs.

Mariah Clay: Accepted to a Master of Science in Health and Kinesiology at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) in Fall 2019.

Tony Long: Accepted to a Master of Arts in Psychology at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in Fall 2019.

Doina Morales: Accepted to a Doctoral Program in Computer Science at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) in Fall 2019.

Arriana McDonald: Applying to a Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant at Yale University.

Quynh Chi Quach: Accepted to a Master of Business Administration at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in Fall 2019.

Mariah Clay: Accepted to a Master of Science in Health and Kinesiology at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) in Fall 2019.
Alumni Spotlight: Shakira Barnes

Shakira Barnes (Psychology, 2018) is currently attending Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is seeking a master’s degree in Psychology.

Being a McNair Scholar is hands-down the most rewarding experience I’ve had in undergrad, and the most telling experience of how unprepared I was to apply for grad school. I knew that I wanted to get my Ph.D., but I knew little to nothing about the application process or how to make my application stand out from the other hundreds of applicants. McNair guided me through the different challenges and pushed me to expand my knowledge in a safe and fun way through the seminars, McNair Day, and the McNair Conference. The two most important things I’ve learned through McNair is creating and completing my own research project in a year and how to share my research in front of other people.

McNair walked me through the process of finding a mentor that works for me, brainstorming research interests (specifically ones that fit within the time limit) and creating a well thought out game plan for completing my first independent research project. I presented a PowerPoint presentation at the McNair Conference and a poster presentation McNair Day. This allowed me to not only talk about my research in front of strangers but become so comfortable with being uncomfortable that I can successfully articulate whatever points I want to get across to any audience (at conferences, with employers, and even with grad school admissions interviewers!). So, I’ll leave you with this: find a mentor that works for you; all the pre-data-collection work is going to be a challenge, but it’s worth the experience; and have fun! Go to all the events and make the most of your time in McNair! I promise that if you give your all in this program, McNair will give back to you in more ways than you can count.

Alumni Spotlight: Corbin Lewis

Corbin Lewis (Chemistry, 2017) is currently attending the University of California in Riverside seeking a doctorate in Chemistry.

Being part of the McNair Scholars Program was a great experience because it exposed me to how unprepared I was for graduate school. Before I joined the program all I knew was that I wanted to attend graduate school, but I didn’t realize that to continue my education there was a series of deadlines and procedures I needed to adhere to. McNair allowed me a safe space to tackle the challenges that came with applying to graduate programs across the nation, and it provided me with guidance when the process became too overwhelming. Personally, writing my paper for the McNair journal prepared me for the toughest part of graduate school, writing a thesis in a timely manner. The program walked me through the process of finding a mentor, brainstorming paper topics related to my field of interest, and most importantly creating a game plan for a successful completion. McNair provides students with a mock experience of what can be expected in graduate school, but the skill learned in the program will set students up for success. Just remember to choose a program that fits YOUR needs and interests, and don’t procrastinate.
GIVE US AN UPDATE!

The U.S. Department of Education requires all McNair programs to provide Annual Performance Reports and keep track of alumni until the attainment of a doctoral degree. Alumni can update their information by completing the form below and mailing the information to the McNair Scholars Program – or by contacting Anabel Hernandez at anabel.hernandez@tamucc.edu.

Name: ______________________________________________________________________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________________________
City & State: ____________________________________________________________________________ Zip Code: _______________________________
TAMUCC Cohort Year: ____________________________________________________________________
Highest Degree Attained and When: __________________________________________________________
Degree in Progress: Master’s _____ PhD _______ or Education Complete_______
Field of Study: _________________________________________________________________________
Expected Year of Completion: _____________________________________________________________
School in Attendance: ______________________________________________________________________
Email Address: _______________________________________________________________________

Alumni News

Alfonso Cohuo (Biology, 2018) entered a master’s program in Marine Biology in the Spring 2019 at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Kathryn Hamilton (Bio-Medical Science, 2018) entered a master’s program in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering in the Spring 2019 at Rice University.

Ruth Younger (Early Childhood Education, 2018) entered a master’s program in Counseling in the Spring 2019 at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Doctorate Recipients

Meagan Bryand (Communication, 2009) obtained her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership in December 2015 from the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Samantha Hernandez (Political Science, 2011) obtained her Ph.D. in Political Science in May 2018 from Arizona State University.

Renae Hudak (Kinesiology, 2013) obtained her Doctor of Physical Therapy in June 2017 from the University of Texas Health San Antonio.

Jerahme Martinez (Chemistry, 2009) obtained his Ph.D. in Bio-Chemistry in May 2016 from Rice University.

Amanda Whitmill (Bio-Medical Science, 2011) obtained her Ph.D. in Cell Biology in August 2016 from the University of North Texas.