Apply Today!
- McNair Explorers applications are open for incoming freshmen and sophomores.
- McNair Scholars applications are due March 27, 2020, for rising juniors.
- Apply via our website: https://www.depts.ttu.edu/diversity/mcnair

Announcements:
- Discoveries to Impact Week: Scholars not presenting at the TTU Undergraduate Research Conference should CLICK HERE and register to volunteer!
- Movie Night: Join McNair Outreach on March 6 @ 5:30pm in the McNair Lounge for a group movie night.

About Joe:
I am a chemistry and communications studies major and serve as the vice president of SACNAS, an organization which promotes minorities in STEM. My hobbies include playing racquetball and blues style piano. I believe in the law of attraction, and helping others rise to their full potential.

His Research Interests:
My interest long term is to do research in pharmaceuticals as well to pursue a more efficient and economical fix for potholes. I am currently assisting Dr. Hutchins and a grad student, Daniel Loya, in an amazing project, which involves Crown ether synthesis that can help benefit in the extraction of rare earth metals in recycled technologies.

Grad School Plans:
I hope to find a graduate school program that will further either of my long-term research interests and give me a full ride. I would like to go north or north east, towards New Jersey, Colorado or Pennsylvania. All are areas that have companies in pharmaceutical research.

Why He Loves McNair:
As a stubborn first-generation student, my journey has been a long one. McNair gives me the guidance and tools to succeed with my future goals and grad school. A big part of my struggles that made my journey longer trying to get where I am now was lack of guidance. The importance of receiving help and wisdom from those that have been there or in the process is rewarding no matter what if it is for this program or any situation in life. Nothing is more valuable, in my opinion, than the shoulder of the giants before us.

— Joe Juarez

Campus Connections: UWC
Picture this: You go to class, then you’re in the lab, then you have another class. By the time you’re done, it’s 5 o’clock and you have homework. Homework’s going to last maybe five hours, and by then, it’s midnight and all you want is to go to bed.
This is how environmental engineering major, Juliet Owuor, describes her packed schedule. Juliet is just one of our McNair Scholars who has her sights set on graduate school, but she and a handful of other McNair students are taking charge of their research writing by joining a writing group hosted by the Texas Tech University Writing Center (UWC) just for McNair Scholars.
“It’s not like your writing projects are due right away,” explains Juliet. “Your homework is due—there is a set deadline for it and your GPA depends on it, so you tend to do your homework first. You never touch your paper ever, the entire semester, and then all the sudden it’s been two years and you never did write about all the research you completed. You can easily forget about it when you have so much else to do.”  

Continued on the back page
McNair Writing Group

The goal of the McNair writing group is to help scholars set aside time to do the research writing required by the program. Before graduation, each Scholar is expected to propose, carry out, and write about a significant research project they complete to prepare them for scholarly publication.

Spring 2020 is the first semester McNair Scholars have had a McNair only writing group at the UWC, so current students are pioneering the way for future cohorts. Maria Rodriguez, the tutor facilitating the McNair writing group, says, “What really impressed me was their promptness in responding to the opportunity—I have never seen that before with other groups.”

Despite their busy schedules, these first participants are dedicated to their work and eager to not just complete assignments, but also improve their writing skills and time management. Computer science major Juanita Benjamin explains, “I feel like this time will help me improve as a writer because I set aside time to just write, and I know I will be focused on doing whatever I need to do in that moment.”

McNair Explorer Alyssa Aguirre agrees. She adds, “Here I look ahead. Something might not be due for another two weeks, and I want it done right now, so this helps me with my scheduling.”

Not only does the writing group provide dedicated time to write, it offers scholars support with their projects and a sense of accountability. “We keep track of each other,” says Maria. Scholars make writing goals every time they meet and then are held accountable for those goals at the end of each meeting.

When describing the heavy workload of a double major, Alyssa explains how being a part of the TTU McNair Explorers Program has inspired her: “I’ve never felt so dedicated towards something. I actually want to work for grad school, knowing that I qualify for it, and knowing that if I put the time in and the effort, I can do it.” Theses sentiments are reflected by all the students in the writing group, and their eager participation is a testimony to their dedication. That dedication is what sets these Scholars apart. “They know what they want,” says Maria. “They know exactly what they are working for—they are super highly motivated, and they are taking advantage of the resources that Texas Tech and the writing center offers them.”

There are still a few spots open to McNair Scholars and Explorers who might want to join the writing group. Let Dr. Jon Crider know by Feb. 29, 2020, if you are interested! The group meets weekly on Tuesday nights at the University Writing Center.

Other writing center resources available to students include 1:1 in-person consultations, online asynchronous feedback, the new “Red Writer” video series, tip sheets, and more. Check it out or set up an appointment today at https://writingcenter.ttu.edu/.

— Rebekah Smith

We’re so happy that our McNair Scholars get a chance to work with TTU’s Writing Center and join a writing group—especially this early on in their academic careers. To be honest, I never knew how important or effective writing groups were until starting my Ph.D. program in Higher Education Research here at TTU.

It’s easy to become isolated while writing, which ultimately, is daunting. A writing group makes this process more manageable. Whether you’re writing a paper, thesis, or eventually a dissertation, a writing group adds that extra support. There is goal setting and discussion with your peers, and most importantly, dedicated time to actually write. You’re coming in with a purpose to achieve something and leaving the writing group feeling proud because you achieved something.

Being introduced to the concept of writing groups so early on will not only allow our scholars to be successful during their undergrad but will also greatly help them once they enter graduate school.

— LaTricia Phillips

Pictured here: Juliet Owuor, Kaevyn Maple, Alyssa Aguirre, Maria Rodriguez (UWC), and Juanita Benjamin