Congrats to the May 2019 McNair Graduates!

- Trevor Fellbaum, Jr.
  B.S., Computer Science
  Bellevue, Nebraska

- Lizeth Fraire
  B.A., Psychology
  Grand Island, Nebraska

- Kiley Gilbert
  B.A., Psychology
  Pacific Junction, Iowa

- Daisy Guiza Beltran
  B.S., Biochemistry & Microbiology
  Lincoln, Nebraska

- Colton Harper
  B.S., Computer Science
  Hutchinson, Kansas

- Grecia Macias
  B.S., Biology & Sociology
  Lincoln, Nebraska

- Elizabeth Otto
  B.A., Psychology
  Lincoln, Nebraska

- Brandi Russell
  B.S., Anthropology
  Aberdeen, South Dakota
Nail Awarded Goldwater Scholarship

Mark Nail, a mechanical engineering major from Leawood, Kansas, was recently awarded the prestigious 2019 Goldwater Scholarship. The nationally competitive scholarship awards up to $7,500 a year for sophomores and juniors preparing for careers in science, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The program was established by Congress to honor the memory of Senator Barry M. Goldwater.

Students selected for a Goldwater Scholarship (1) demonstrate a strong commitment to a research career in STEM, (2) display intellectual intensity in STEM, (3) and show potential for significant future contributions to their field. Mark’s goal is to obtain a doctoral degree in mechanical engineering and conduct research in robotics at a Research I university or a research-driven company. For his Goldwater essay, he discussed research he has been involved with since his freshman year.

Mark conducted his 2018 McNair research project with Dr. Sebastian Elbaum on an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) for sensor placement in remote areas and the aerial deployment of rotary drones from other carrier drones. He has continued his drone research with Dr. Carrick Detweiler in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering. All of this research was represented in his Goldwater essay, where he described the challenges and lessons learned through his work. He also explained how this research has driven him to pursue a graduate degree.

This summer, Mark is working as an intern on mechanical product research and development at Garmin in Kansas City.

Harper Selected for Student Luminary Award

Colton Harper was one of ten UNL students who received a Student Luminary Award at a ceremony on March 8, 2019. The Student Luminary Awards are granted to “exceptional students who make a difference through their leadership and commitment to improving the campus or community.” At the time he received the award, Colton was a senior computer science student.

Reframed for the university’s 150th-anniversary celebration, the Student Luminary Awards replace the Outstanding Student Leadership Awards and are one of the highest honors presented to UNL students. This year, there were 8 undergraduate and 2 graduate students selected for the award and each recipient received $1,000.

“Students were selected because they motivate, inspire and energize those around them,” said Laurie Bellows, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “They are inclusive, collaborative and highly effective as team players. They add value to others’ lives because they’re willing to act.”
Sonoor Majid is participating in the 2019 Summer Research Early Identification Program at Brown University. She is working with Yang Zhou, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology.

Darius Fox is participating in the 2019 Summer Research Program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He is working with Dr. Rebecca Macken, in the Cell and Regenerative Physiology Research Lab on muscle abnormalities associated with cerebral palsy.

S since the UNL McNair Scholars Program began in 1995, we’ve served 298 students. Excluding the continuing Scholars, 97.7 percent have earned their bachelor’s degree. Forty-four UNL McNair Program alumni have achieved Ph.D.s, 135 have earned master’s degrees, and 20 have earned professional degrees. Currently, 21 UNL McNair alumni are enrolled in Ph.D. programs, 9 are pursuing master’s, and 2 are pursuing professional degrees.

Cole Dempsey will be working under Dr. Santosh Pitla in the UNL Advanced Machinery Systems Lab and apply for graduate school in the fall.

Trevor Fellbaum, Jr. is working as a software engineer at Moody’s Analytics in Omaha, Nebraska.

Lizeth Fraire will pursue a master’s of social work at the University of Nebraska–Omaha.

Kiley Gilbert will pursue a Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Minnesota.

Daisy Guiza Beltran will be working as a lab technician with Dr. Limei Zhang, UNL Department of Biochemistry, and apply to graduate school in the fall.

Colton Harper will pursue a Ph.D. in computer science at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Grecia Macias has accepted an offer from the University of Michigan Health Informatics master’s program.

Elizabeth Otto plans to continue her research and apply to clinical psychology programs in the fall.

Brandi Russell was accepted to the Master’s/Ph.D. of Public Health program at Brown University and will begin in Fall 2019.

Cole Dempsey

Trevor Fellbaum, Jr.

Lizeth Fraire

Kiley Gilbert

Daisy Guiza Beltran

Colton Harper

Grecia Macias

Elizabeth Otto

Brandi Russell
McNair Alumni Earn Advanced Degrees

We applaud these UNL McNair alumni who earned advanced degrees during 2018-19:

Doctoral degrees

Myesha (Albert) Applewhite, Ph.D. (McNair Scholar 1998-99) earned a master’s degree in psychology from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in August 2003 and a Ph.D. in criminology from the University of Texas at Dallas in August 2018. Dr. Applewhite is currently working at the University of Texas at Dallas School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences Children and Families Lab as a school visit coordinator.

Karise (Carrillo) Curtis, Ph.D. (McNair Scholar 2009-11) earned a master’s degree in criminal justice from the University at Albany, SUNY in December 2012 and a Ph.D. in criminal justice with a focus on comparative criminology of homicide from the University at Albany, SUNY in December 2018. Dr. Curtis is a data scientist at Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

Ivan Moreno-Hernandez, Ph.D. (McNair Scholar 2012-14) earned a Ph.D. in chemistry from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in June 2019 and has accepted a postdoctoral position in the College of Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley.

Professional degree

Jeffrey Belmont, M.D. (McNair Scholar 2007-2010) earned a master’s degree in public health from Tulane University in May 2014 and earned his M.D. from the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans in May 2019.

Alumni Awards, Fellowships & Publications

Alumni Awards & Fellowships

Jenn Andersen (McNair Scholar 2013-2015) was selected for the 2018-2019 Outstanding Graduate Research & Creative Activities Award. This award recognizes excellence in graduate student research and creativity at UNL. It is awarded based on the student’s on-going outstanding contribution to research, future promise as a researcher, and on the originality, imagination, and significance of their research activity. Generous gifts to the University of Nebraska Foundation have made this award possible.

Colton Harper (McNair Scholar 2016-19) was awarded an 2019-20 Othmer Fellowship from the UNL Department of Computer Science and Engineering. The Othmer Fellowship may be renewed for an additional two years given continued excellent progress toward his degree. Colton has been accepted to the Computer Science Ph.D. program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Amanda Miller (McNair Scholar 2016–18) was selected for the 2019-20 Molecular Mechanisms of Disease (MMoD) predoctoral training program. Amanda’s project is entitled, Investigation of Lysochelin, a Natural Product Containing both the Iron Chelating Catecholates and the Cellular Signaling Spermidine. The MMoD predoctoral program is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In April 2019, Amanda also received the James D. Carr First Year Graduate Teaching Assistant Award from the UNL Department of Chemistry.

Alumni Publications


McNair Alumni – keep us informed as you advance through your career, including progress in graduate school, publications, and other milestones. You may update your information at anytime: http://www.unl.edu/mcnair/scholarupdate.shtml
McNair Scholars continue to make an impact on the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus and in the community through their leadership roles and volunteerism. This is a partial listing of their honors, awards, scholarships, and leadership activities:

Baudelio Abrica – 2019-20 UCARE award; Dean's List; Mexican American Student Association Vice President; and Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity.

Aleece Barnard – 2019-20 UCARE award; President of the UNL College Chapter of the NAACP; Black Leadership Symposium speaker; Safe Quarters and West Lincoln Elementary School Fall Festival volunteer.

Taylor Billington – Honors Program; Regent’s Scholar; Society of Physics Students; Horticulture Club; Behlen Observatory Open House volunteer; SAC Museum Physics demo volunteer.

Cole Dempsey – 2018-19 UCARE award; Dean’s List; University Honors Program; Regents Scholarship; Morris H. Schneider Fund for Excellence in Mechanical Engineering Scholarship; Conant Fund Scholarship; Honors Textbook Scholarship; Husker Bass Anglers; Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society Nebraska Alpha Chapter; Phi Eta Sigma honor society; Pi Tau Sigma Nebraska Honor Society; UNL Robotics Club (UNLRC) member.

Trevor Fellbaum, Jr. – Regent’s Scholarship; Grow with Google Challenge Scholarship; and Beta Sigma Psi recruitment chair.

Darius Fox – 2018-19 UCARE award; 2019-20 UCARE award; OASIS Academic Excellence Award; Spark Scholarship; Nutrition and Health Promotion Association treasurer; Civic Engagement Scholar; UNL NAACP member; Rotract member; W.E.B. Dubois Honor Society; and OASIS peer mentor.

Lizeth Fraire – Nebraska Court Improvement Project research and evaluation intern; and Nebraska College Preparatory Academy (NCPA) Scholarship.

Kiley Gilbert – Graduated With Distinction in May 2019; 2018-19 UCARE award; Dean’s List; Psychology of Immigration TA Spring 2019; Advanced Social Psychology TA Fall 2018; Nebraska Achievement Scholarship; Susan Thompson Buffett Scholarship; WH Thompson tutor; OASIS Study Studio tutor; American Psychological Association; Psi Chi International Psychology Honor Society; Phi Beta Chi president; and Undergraduate Psychology Lab RA.

Daisy Guiza Beltran – Zhang group RA; completed 2018 ASMB certification; Mexican American Student Association; Doris Sautter Scholarship, Paul Carlberg Scholarship, and Hazel V. Emley Scholarship.

Colton Harper – 2018-19 UCARE award; 2019 Student Luminary Award Recipient; University Honors Program; STEMentors, Computer Science and Engineering Ambassadors Co-founder; Senior Design Gold Team Award; Innocents Society Selections Chair; Broad Considerations of Tech Co-founder; BCT Tech & Ethics Conference Chair; BCT Lecture Series Co-Chair; Consultant & Curriculum Designer for Beyond School Bells, after-school STEM education program among rural Nebraska; and Lincoln Title 1 Robotics Club after school program Co-founder and Mentor.

Nestor Hernandez – 2019-20 UCARE award; Undergraduate Sociology Teaching and Research Student (USTARS); Dean’s List; First Husker Scholar; David-Chambers Scholarship; Max & Margaret Pumphrey Scholarship; and Robert D. Carstens Scholarship.

Ashleigh Herrera – James Blackman Scholarship; President of Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers; SHPE Scholarship; American Institute of Chemical Engineers; Society of Women Engineers; W.E.B. Dubois Honor Society treasurer; and Her Campus Contributor.

Carolyn Herrera – Graduated With High Distinction in December 2018; Dean’s List; Harry K. Wolfe Outstanding Senior Award Nominee; Introduction to Psychology TA (online) and Recitation Instructor; National Merit Scholar; National Hispanic Scholar; Beadle Scholarship Association for Psychological Science; International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies; National Honor Society in Psychology (Psi Chi); and University of Nebraska Undergraduate Psychology Organization.

Maham Javaid – 2018-19 UCARE award; Psych 181 TA; UNL Women’s Center volunteer; and W.H. Thompson Scholar.

Mahnoor Javaid – Pre-Pharmacy Club Vice-President; W.H. Thompson Scholar; Athletic Department tutor; Nebraska Achievement Scholarship; and Bryan Hospital ER volunteer.

My-Linh Luc – 2019-20 UCARE award; Psi Chi International Psychology Honor Society; Minority Pre-Health Association; Microbiology Club; Vietnamese Student Association; American Medical Women’s Association; William H. Thompson Scholar; and Big Event Volunteer.

Grecia Macias – 2018-19 UCARE award; Undergraduate Sociology Teaching and Research Award; Minority Health Disparities REACH Lab RA; Nebraska Fall Research Symposium Undergraduate Poster Competition Winner 2018; and LPS Community Learning Centers NE STEM4U Program Facilitator.

Sonoor Majid – 2018-19 UCARE award; Dean’s List; BIO 101 & LIF1 120 TA; Susan T. Buffett Scholarship; Arnold H. White Memorial Scholarship; Lincoln Rotary Club 14 Foundation Scholarship; R.H. Davis Scholarship; SSS Tutor; UNL American Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology; and Minority Based Pre-Health Club.

Logan Miller – 2019-20 UCARE award; PSYC 181 tutor; and RA in the Vision, Attention, Memory, and Perception (VAMP) lab.

Mark Nail – Honors Program; Dean’s List; 2019 Goldwater Scholarship; Chancellor’s Scholarship; Raikes School Scholarship; Hispanic Scholarship Fund; Raikes Design Studio Team Product Manager; and FIRST Robotics Nebraska Co-Founder.

Nancy Nguyen – 2019-20 UCARE award; W.E.B. DuBois Honors Society; Cabela’s Women in Leadership Scholarship; Kappa Delta Chi Sorority, Inc. (Treasurer); Define American; and Minority Pre-Health Association.

Elizabeth Otto – Graduated With Distinction in May 2019; 2018-19 UCARE award; Dean’s List; TA for Psych/CYAF 471; American Psychological Association; Psi Chi International Psychology Honor Society; and Levine Diversity Enhancement Award.

Juliana Rodriguez – 2019-20 UCARE award; 2018-19 UCARE award; NASA Nebraska Space grant; Susan Thomson Buffett Scholarship; Schulte Family Scholarship; Department of Biological Systems Engineering Scholarship; NANO Outreach position at Nebraska Center for Material and Nanoscience; Morrill Hall Sunday with a Scientist; Chemistry; Gateway mall NANODays event volunteer; Women in Science conference booth; and Nanotechnology in the body and circuit kits.

Brandi Russell – Nebraska Oral and Facial surgery treatment coordinator.
McNair Scholars disseminated their research findings at numerous local, regional, and national conferences:


Scholars Complete Theses and Co-author Publications

McNair Scholars who co-authored recent publications or completed a senior thesis/project include:


**Cole Dempsey** - Honors thesis: Development of a Novel Weight-Offloading System for Gait Rehabilitation. Advisor: Carl Nelson, Ph.D.


**Kiley Gilbert** – Senior thesis: Guilt Amongst the Innocent: Perceptions of Exonerees. Advisors: Cynthia Willis-Esqueda, Ph.D. and Ashley Votruba, Ph.D., J.D.


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**UNL McNair Scholars Research Journal**

The UNL McNair Scholars Program publishes an online research journal to showcase researchers who might not otherwise have another outlet for publication. Comprised of nine original articles written by Scholars under the guidance of their faculty mentors, our McNair Scholars Research Journal (MSRJ) is hosted at: [http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnair](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnair). Since Fall 2010 when our program began publishing the MSRJ, there have been over 9,860 full-text downloads. Between June 1, 2018 and May 31, 2019, there were over 850 full-text downloads. The most downloaded papers of the past 12 months were:

- **Cossel, T.** (2010). Child Sexual Abuse Victims and their Families Receiving Services at a Child Advocacy Center: Mental Health and Support Needs. (272 downloads) [http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnairjournal/1/](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnairjournal/1/)
- **Ridling, B.** (2010). Insight and Locus of Control as Related to Aggression in Individuals with Severe Mental Illness (SMI). (114 downloads) [http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnairjournal/2/](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/mcnairjournal/2/)