

Psyc E-Newsletter

Winthrop University
October 2015



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McNair Scholars Program

- \$2600 stipend for completed summer research internship
- Supervised summer research experience
- Room and board during summer research
- Faculty and graduate student mentoring
- GRE preparation materials, instruction, and GRE fee waiver
- Graduate school advice and support through the application process
- National fee waivers and fellowships
- Travel to present research, visit & interview at graduate programs
- Recognition events and special lectures



“There are many benefits to this program and a McNair Scholar has to work very hard. This is not a scholarship. There are milestones that have to be reached along the way, and the McNair Scholar does not receive payment until the project has been completed.”

- Dr. Fortner-Wood

Applications are due October 16

McNair Scholars Program - By Melissa Snodgrass

Ronald McNair



Ronald Erwin McNair was born October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina.

He was an assiduous African-American man who accomplished a great deal in his short time here.

A teacher believed in him and helped him in school, and that made all the difference in his life. He was class valedictorian at his high school, and went on to earn his PhD in Laser Physics at M.I.T.

Sadly, his life ended in 1986 in the space shuttle Challenger explosion. Congress funded the McNair Scholar's Program in memory of his dedication to learning and the high level of expectations of himself that he achieved during his brief lifetime.

The Winthrop McNair Scholars Program prepares first generation, low-income, and underrepresented undergraduates to be successful in PhD programs by providing research and other opportunities as well as financial support throughout the graduate admissions process. Winthrop's program includes, but is not limited to, a paid summer research experience, faculty mentoring, workshops, GRE and graduate school application preparation, and travel to present research and explore graduate programs.

Dr. Fortner-Wood is the Director of the McNair Scholars Program. "The McNair Scholars Program helps students to be very well prepared for graduate school. There are many benefits to this program and a McNair Scholar has to work very hard. This is not a scholarship. There are milestones that have to be reached along the way, and the McNair Scholar does not receive payment until the project has been completed."

Each scholar completes a summer research program and two McNair classes; one while taking the summer research and one in the fall of their senior year which is a graduate application course helping them through the arduous graduate school admission process.

McNair scholars are attending some very prestigious well known schools such as Duke University, Wake Forest, Georgetown and Temple University.

Dr. Fortner-Wood regards being director of the McNair program as her most rewarding role at Winthrop. She said, "I learn a lot from students' research, how to support students, and learn from experts all across the country. Watching students' successes is what it is all about."

For more information, attend the information session on Monday, October 12th at 7 p.m. in Dinkins Auditorium or contact Dr. Fortner-Wood in her office at 323-2641 or in the McNair office at 323-2125.

McNair Scholar's Eligibility Requirements

- Interest in going to graduate school
- U.S. Citizen or otherwise meet the citizenship requirement
- First generation college student and come from a low-income family and/or from a group underrepresented in higher education.
- Available to participate in the McNair Summer Research Internship all day every weekday. The anticipated dates for the 2016 Summer Research Experience are May 11 - July 8.
- Enrolled in a 4 year institution in SC with a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Will have 54+ hours by the end of the next spring semester
- Will not graduate before a year from December



Faculty Spotlight—Dr. Fortner-Wood

By Lindsay Gaynor



Dr. Fortner-Wood
Director of Winthrop McNair
Program

Dr. Fortner-Wood is in her 18th year at Winthrop, after receiving her Ph.D. in Child Development and Family Studies at Purdue University. Her research focuses on early development, in particular the long-term effects of early relationships. Her professional service includes consulting on attachment in adoption in S.C. family courts and using evaluation to improve federally-funded programs (i.e., U.S. Department of Education, NSF, and SAMHSA). She is the Co-Chair of the National Council on Family Relations Adoption Focus Group and serves on the Board of Directors for the Children's Attention Home. She oversees the curriculum and assessment committee and helps maintain the department webpage.

What she likes to do for fun

She loves to watch movies with her family, going to Charleston, and going to high school football games.

How she got interested in Psychology

She had been babysitting since 8th grade and already enjoyed working with kids. When she transferred to College of Charleston she needed to choose a major; she thought Psychology would be a great major because her friends told her she gave good advice. She did not have any interest in Counseling or Clinical Psychology at the time. Her Developmental Psychology class really interested her, and when she had the opportunity to participate in research, she realized that was the area she wanted to pursue. She fondly recalled using Bart Simpson character pictures to get third graders to answer questions about different stimuli in the research.

Favorite class in college

Child Development and Statistics were her favorite classes. She ended up taking several statistics classes for fun. She found both subjects to be fascinating. In graduate school, Social Psychology class was her favorite.

Classes she teaches at Winthrop

Dr. Fortner-Wood teaches Developmental Psychology 206, Advanced Child Development Psychology 411, McNair Research 300, and McNair Graduate Application 302.



Expert Witness on Adoption

Student Spotlight—Emily Hokett

By Melissa Snodgrass



Emily Hokett

Emily Hokett, a senior Psychology and Spanish double major, has spent two years in the McNair Scholars Program. She plans to pursue her PhD in Biopsychology, and she is currently gathering information on possible graduate schools to attend. Emily said the McNair program has really helped her prepare to apply to graduate school. She has already taken the GRE, and she said the GRE prep helped her to greatly improve her test score. The McNair program covered the cost of the GRE prep and GRE as well.

Emily applied for the McNair Scholars Program in her sophomore year after interviewing a graduate assistant and current McNair Scholar. She wrote her application essay about why she wanted to do research, what drew her to it, and what her plans and goals are after graduate school. The very process of writing the essay helped her to solidify her interest in research.

Dr. Reiland, Hokett's faculty advisor, recommended the McNair program while they were collaborating on a research project. They finished their research and published it in the *Journal of Psychological Inquiry*. Emily enjoys writing and tutoring students who need help in writing.

Emily enjoys the McNair program and the support she has received from her fellow scholars. "It's nice to have people who understand the unique challenges that come with having extra projects and research on top of regular college work."

In addition to the McNair program, Emily has spent six months studying abroad in Costa Rica. "It was an interesting experience exploring a different culture where I met someone different every day." She said she learned something new each day she was there, from new words to new ways of phrasing something. She stretched her wings by only speaking Spanish while she was in class 4-6 hours a day and then helped local citizens to learn English as a second language.



Tips for Making Good Use of Advising

Dr. Collins shares some of her best tips for making great use of academic advising:

- **Use the DegreeWorks planner function. It will help you plan out what courses you need, credit hours you have left, etc. Here is the link to the tutorial:**
- **Come prepared to your advising meeting with a list of classes you feel fit a certain requirement**
- **Have a back-up list of courses**
- **Ask plenty of questions regarding requirements, classes, credit hours, etc. and even Study Abroad!**
- **Carefully read the e-mails sent to you by the department about advising and who you go to (e.g. Freshmen and sophomore sees a student assistant, etc.)**
- **Meet with your advisor ANYTIME! Even outside of advising time.**

Winthrop McNair Scholar's Alumnus Discusses Graduate School

By Keisha Carden



Keisha Carden

Graduate school was always a challenge to conceptualize during my undergraduate career – it was ethereal. I was told relentlessly to prepare for tough academic obstacles (i.e., thesis + dissertation), create a shiny dressed up version of myself to nestle between the lines on my CV, and to craft a personal statement that was both unique but representative of all of the necessary qualifications. As if that's not enough to rattle any type-A, semi-neurotic, student's cage, I don't know what is. However, as I reflect on my first (rather successful) year of graduate school, I can tell you this: it's nothing like what they try to prepare you for. It is so much more. While graduate school is often comparable to wandering aimlessly, and weaponless, into a lion's den wrought with red tape and political agendas, it is also a world designed to foster and engage the deepest crevices of your psyche. I'd like to shed a little bit of light on the darkest parts of graduate school that

no one prepares you for, and let me be the one to tell you that those dark parts will teach you more about yourself and the world around you than you might think, because let's face it, graduate school is not just graduate school – it's a way of life.

First, you will feel like a worthless idiot. Often. In the ivory tower, we like to call this "imposter syndrome." Though it may not be documented or discussed in the DSM-5 or the ICD-10, it's very, very real. This generally occurs during the first year, but I'd venture to say that the pesky imposter syndrome monster makes a comfy home in your brain for the remainder of your graduate school career (you just learn to drown out his voice). You'll wonder how your lazy behind got accepted, and how such an intellectual, educated, and qualified panel of professors could have possibly failed to detect the fact that you don't belong. You'll feel like you fooled them all and aren't worthy. Then the utterly maladaptive and crushing belief will settle in -- that you won't last and you won't make it. Notice those thoughts and be mindful of them but don't strive to judge those thoughts. Let them pass for what they are, just thoughts. Those thoughts are normal, and I can guarantee that the rest of your cohort is having them just as often. Those thoughts will subside as you get into the groove of things and begin to perfect your craft. Just remember, you got into your program for a reason, and it was a really good one.

Keisha Carden

Keisha D. Carden, Winthrop class of 2014, is in her second year of her doctoral degree in Clinical Geropsychology at the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) working under the mentorship of Dr. Rebecca S. Allen.

Her current research interests include:

- **Family caregiving for older adults (with and without cognitive impairment)**
- **Aging in place**
- **Psychotherapy and interpersonal process with individuals with acquired brain injury**
- **Psychological flexibility development across the lifespan**
- **Autobiographical memory and reminiscence therapy**
- **Intergenerational relationship development**
- **Outcomes and treatment mechanisms of non-pharmacological interventions that incorporate aspects of positive affect maximization, empathy, savoring, flow, and mindfulness.**

Alumnus Discussion (continued)



Keisha and her fiancé

Do not, I repeat, do NOT put your life on hold. My boyfriend and I got engaged and we adopted a baby German Shepherd in my first year of graduate school, and those were two of the best, and most fulfilling, decisions I've ever made. Sometimes, you can have your cake and eat it too. Prioritize your career around your life, you'll thank yourself for it somewhere down the road.

Make friends. Get to know and enjoy those in your cohort. You'll be fighting the same battles and will need each other to lean on. My cohort has been one of my biggest, and most salient, support systems. We study together, tailgate together, and a few of us have fostered such rewarding relationships that they are now my bridesmaids. Make friends

in other departments – you don't want to spend every Friday night debating the validity of Dissociative Identity Disorder with the psychology crowd. Lastly, make friends outside of research and academia if you want to stay sane. Academia is one small and highly exclusive microcosm within an entire world of varying perspectives and culture that you don't want to miss out on.

Get to know your surroundings. It's so easy to get wrapped up in the monotonous and challenging schedule that demands your attention all day, everyday. Find a new coffee shop, go there, drink coffee, and DON'T DO WORK! Go to an art museum. Go hiking. Buy a yoga membership. Take up painting. Scout out local music venues. Graduate school often demands that you move to a new area, and while you may not consider this your permanent home, it is, nevertheless, your home for quite some time. Embrace the location and enjoy it while you can. After all, you won't get this time back.

Write! Create a writing schedule and make yourself stick to it! This is the most challenging part of graduate school. For me, I always assumed I needed a large chunk of time in order to get any writing done but found that wasn't feasible. You'll have classes, classwork, and meetings upon meetings, and they're all staggered throughout your days leaving only small chunks of time. I had to find time where I could and block those times off consistently for writing projects. Find your own pace and times that work for you, but be vigilant. If it's writing time, write! Sometimes pulling up the document and typing the first word is the hardest part, but once you begin writing, it will flow. If you can, read Paul Silvia's "How to Write A Lot." You can download a PDF version of the text online for free. Thank me later.



Keisha and her other first year classmates

Save money, and a lot of it.

Graduate school is expensive in a variety of contexts. Textbooks cost hundreds. Travelling to conferences can level out to thousands. In a clinical doctoral program, you have internship interviews to look forward to and licensure testing.

Look into Roth IRAs, other mechanisms of investing, and create a budget that you'll stick to.

When you get out of graduate school, you'll want to be worth something, and you'll want to have money tucked away for a down payment on a house, or to buy a new car. My fiancé and I applied for a credit card (Venture) that rewards you with points for flights in order to save up for all of the travelling that graduate school requires.

With that being said, go to as many conferences as you can, especially international conferences. They're worth it.



Alumnus Discussion (continued)

Learn your limits, and dare I say, learn to say “no!” I am guilty on all levels of agreeing to all projects and all manuscript prospects. While volunteering for a variety of opportunities is a wonderful and rewarding thing that will likely make you competitive in the future, be wary, it can also be a fatal flaw. In graduate school, it always feels like there is this unspoken rule that you must agree to take on anything that is asked of you, especially when it’s your mentor asking. However, if you endorse a self-reputation of taking on any project floated your way, it will become an overwhelming and insurmountable position that you’ve put yourself in. Accept that you are a human and you do have limits. Learn your limits well and push them a bit to better yourself, but respect those limits.

Enjoy what you do. If you don’t enjoy what you do, you’re not doing it right, and that’s ok as long as you take the time to reevaluate your approach and your attitude towards your work. Graduate school is NOT just school – it’s a lifestyle, and a damn tough one. When I entered my first year, my convictions to pursue a career in academia and intervention research was salient and unshakeable, but over time I noticed I just felt bored, empty, and inadequate. The moment I walked into my first session with a client struggling with a childhood history of sexual trauma, interpersonal struggles, major depressive disorder, and borderline personality traits, it hit me that I was in the right place, doing the right thing. It brought meaning to my life and my career pursuits. At the *ripe old age* of 23, I invest much of my identity in my academic and career endeavors, but without meaning, what do any of us really have? Carstensen’s Socioemotional Selectivity Theory comes to mind; as we age we realize that time isn’t as expansive as we once had imagined. Mortality and existential crises seep into our daily thoughts, and we realize that emotional satisfaction is more important than we’d cared to consider, and we realize meaning making is one of the most important things we can do for ourselves. Find meaning in what you’re doing and enjoy the ride!

Anyone wishing to contact Keisha with any questions can email her at kdcarden1@crimson.ua.edu

In High Demand

The Psychology Department and Gerontology Program are co-sponsoring In High Demand, a program designed to demonstrate the need for people to be knowledgeable of and willing to work with seniors.



- High Need
- High Job Demand
- High Job Security
- Possible High Pay

Find out more

**Thursday, October 15
Owens G01
11:00—12:15**



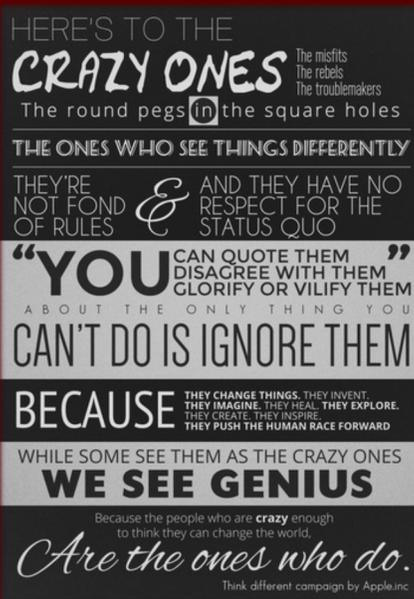
Keisha’s baby German Shepherd

Call Me Crazy by Ayana Crawford

Psi Chi / Psyc Club is partnering with DSU to present Call Me Crazy, an unprecedented customized "conversation" that details Walker's journey from pre-diagnosis with bipolar disorder to achieving success and the many ups and downs in between.



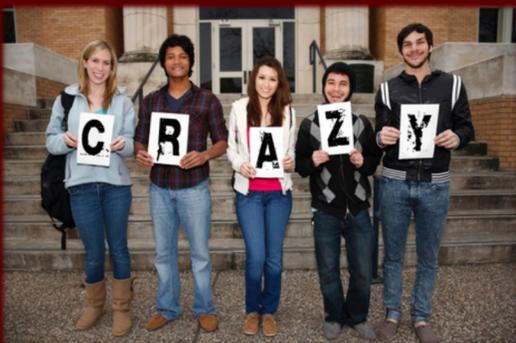
Call Me Crazy "is more than a feel good lecture, it's a feel EVERYTHING lecture!" Walker, a natural in the spotlight, has delivered this presentation in more than 30 states across the country and has received rave reviews for his past programs and performances.



"Throughout my career in treating people who are diagnosed with mental illness, coming to a place of acceptance of their condition can be difficult not only for them, but for those around them. A primary 'road block' to this acceptance is the unwillingness to talk about mental illness due to its continued stigma in society. In his lecture, Call Me Crazy, Joshua shares his own journey of coming to acceptance of his own diagnosis. Joshua's lecture is an interactive, funny, informative, but most importantly of all, a HONEST presentation of what it is like to live with a mental illness.

Audiences will leave feeling

enlightened, supported and validated by someone who 'gets it.' A can't miss lecture for those who are diagnoses with a a mental illness, loved ones of those who have mental illness, professionals and those who are just wanting to learn more!" -Sarah Reed-Lieb, LPC from Associates In Clinical Psychiatry.



Other Psi Chi / Psyc Club Happenings

Halloween Trivia
with Dr. Ritzer

Tentative date: October 29
11am in Kinard 101



Making Holiday Cards for
Soldiers
November 19,
11am-12pm in Kinard 101



Newsletter Editorial Staff

Lindsay Gaynor, Student Editor
Melissa Snodgrass, Writer
Ayana Crawford, Writer
Keisha Carden, Guest Writer
Dr. McKemy, Faculty Supervisor

