

July 27, 2021

Re: Celebrating the Winthrop McNair Summer 2021 Researchers



Dear Winthrop,

As has become my good fortune to do often, I am writing to share bragging rights over the outstanding performance of our McNair summer researchers. Many of you witnessed the Scholar's impressive research products during our [summer research symposium](#) June 28. Thank you for being a part of the Scholars' support network.



*Winthrop McNair 2021 Summer Scholars*

This summer, McNair supported 11 new and 6 continuing McNair Scholars through our research internship May 12 – July 2. Those Scholars and Mentors are listed below. Another continuing Scholar, Carlos Escoto-Diaz (Mentor: Dr. Matt Stern) is completing the Harvard Summer Honors Undergraduate Research Program ([SHURP](#)) virtually.

Scholar	Mentor	Major	Research Project
<b>Kenny Butler<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Christian Grattan	BioChem ACS	Sphingosine Kinase Inhibition Using Modified Variants of Sphingosine Kinase Inhibitor 1
<b>Josie Chestnut<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Jeffrey Sinn	Biology and Psychology	Predicting Economic Conservatism through Measures of Deference to Prestige and Exploitive Motives
<b>Brooklyn Clive<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Jeffrey Sinn	Environmental Science	Is Environmentalism a Moral Issue? Using Moral Foundations Theory and Schwartz Value Theory to Conceptualize Environmentalism in Terms of Morality
<b>Joseph Dupuy<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Michael Lipscomb	Political Science	The Moral Question of Economic Inequality
<b>Lucas Dupuy<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Duha Hamed	Math	The positive impacts of the COVID-19 lockdowns for students
<b>Brandon Ellison</b>	Dr. Timea Fernandez	BioChem ACS	Fabrication of an RNA-Based Fluorescent Biosensor for the Detection of Dopamine
<b>Leslie Facio<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Courtney Guenther	Biology and Psychology	Assessing physical activity using Fitbit technology and measuring well-being following a brief breathing mediation
<b>Nyssa Hemingway<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Adolphus Belk	Political Science	A Critical Race Theory Analysis of Police Reform and Social Justice Movements
<b>Terrik Johnson<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Joni Boyd	Exercise Science	An Examination of the Effects of COVID-19 Quarantine on Mental Health in College Athletes
<b>Samantha Kennedy-Scott</b>	Dr. Brent Woodfill	Anthropology	Pre-field and Phase 1 Survey of Tyger Village (38UN213)
<b>Jomar Lewis<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Christian Grattan	Biology	The inhibition of sphingosine kinase using modified variants of zone 2 of sphingosine kinase inhibitor one

<b>Jasmine Moyd<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Kelly M. Costner	Math; Minor in Ed Studies	STEM Educator Experiences During the Pandemic: Preparation vs. Effectiveness in Remote Learning Environments
<b>Bobbie Owen<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Brent Woodfill	Environmental Studies and Sociology	Contributing factors of success or failure of grassroots movements in Rock Hill
<b>Molly Quetel<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. James Hanna	ACS Chemistry	Visible-Light Promoted Alkylation of Imines in the Presence of an Organic Photocatalyst
<b>Lydia Rodriguez</b>	Dr. Katherine Knop	Psychology	The Impact of COVID-19 and Learning Modalities on the College Experience
<b>Savannah Stinson<sup>S</sup></b>	Dr. Michael Sickels	Sociology	The Experience of Faculty Women of Color in White Institutions
<b>Eric Walters</b>	Dr. Jason Hurlbert	BioChem ACS	Expression and Purification of GeneM: A Novel Virulence Factor of Unknown Function from the Phytopathogen <i>Clavibacter michiganensis</i>

**Because of the commitment to excellence exhibited by every member of this summer cohort and the expert support of their faculty mentors, Winthrop's McNair Scholars have once again brought home several awards for their summer research.** As we have done most years since we were first funded in 2009, Winthrop's McNair program incorporated the [Southeastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel \(SAEOPP\) McNair/SSS national Research Conference](#) into our summer internship. The 2021 SAEOPP conference was held virtually and our program hosted the conference for our summer cohort from the first floor of Dinkins (thank you Dr. Burnside, of the ASC, and Mr. Leon, our Custodian).

That this collection of projects is among our strongest is evidenced by the proportion and number of live presentations selected from and top awards assigned to Winthrop Scholars. Of Winthrop's McNair Scholars, **13 submitted 10-minute recorded presentations** for SAEOPP consideration (indicated with <sup>S</sup> after each Scholar's name above). From all research presentations submitted by Winthrop and other schools by the June 15 deadline, seven oral and three poster presentations were selected to be delivered live on the first day of the conference, June 23, with just 24 hours' notice. **Four of the 10 live presentations belonged to Winthrop McNair Scholars** (indicated with <sup>L</sup> beside the Scholar's names below). Seven of our 13 presenters received top 3 awards, with cash. Although it is my prerogative to be biased in favor of Winthrop McNair Scholars, my years observing McNair presentations in general and the extra presentations I witnessed by this group convince me that each of our 2021 Scholars' presentations is award worthy.

Winthrop Scholars competed with students from universities all over the country including, Cal State Sacramento, Florida, UCLA, UNT, San Jose State, Morehouse, Eastern Michigan, Talladega College, Wisconsin- Madison, Austin Peay, Concord, UAB, and Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Here are the presentations that were selected for SAEOPP research presentation awards.

Scholar	Mentor	Award	Research Project
<b>Joseph Dupuy<sup>L</sup></b>	Dr. Michael Lipscomb	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Humanities	The Moral Question of Economic Inequality
<b>Leslie Facio</b>	Dr. Courtney Guenther	3 <sup>rd</sup> in Health	Assessing physical activity using Fitbit technology and measuring well-being following a brief breathing mediation
<b>Nyssa Hemingway</b>	Dr. Adolphus Belk	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Social Science	A Critical Race Theory Analysis of Police Reform and Social Justice Movements
<b>Terrik Johnson</b>	Dr. Joni Boyd	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Health	An Examination of the Effects of COVID-19 Quarantine on Mental Health in College Athletes
<b>Jomar Lewis<sup>L</sup></b>	Dr. Christian Grattan	1 <sup>st</sup> in Physical Science (Tied)	The inhibition of sphingosine kinase using modified variants of zone 2 of sphingosine kinase inhibitor one
<b>Jasmine Moyd<sup>L</sup></b>	Dr. Kelly M. Costner	1 <sup>st</sup> in Education	STEM Educator Experiences During the Pandemic: Preparation vs. Effectiveness in Remote Learning Environments
<b>Molly Quetel<sup>L</sup></b>	Dr. James Hanna	1 <sup>st</sup> in Physical Science (Tied)	Visible-Light Promoted Alkylation of Imines in the Presence of an Organic Photocatalyst

**McNair Purpose.** Winthrop's program is funded to serve 30 undergraduates who are first-generation college students from low-income families (FG&LI) and/or who come from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds. At least 2/3rds of each cohort we serve must meet the FG&LI criteria. Most programs around the country are funded to serve 25 students. Winthrop University and Foundation investments in the program; the dedication of our faculty mentors; the widespread support of staff, faculty, and administrators; Winthrop's capability to provide extraordinary undergraduate research experiences; and the efforts of Vice Provost Cooper, Deborah Broome, our staff, and our [Advisory Board](#) help us squeeze the most out of our resources, so we can consistently serve more students than the minimum required. Winthrop is funded through September 30, 2023. We anticipate the next grant competition to occur in the next 6 months.

**Program Objectives.** Winthrop's success in the last two grant competitions was partly due to our earning prior experience points for meeting the first three of our annual program objectives (below).

1. 96% of participants complete high quality research projects (100% in last annual report, APR)
2. 50% of graduates immediately enroll in graduate programs (79% in last APR)
3. 75% of enrollees continue graduate study their second year (92% in last APR)
4. 14% of graduates will earn a PhD within 10 years (to be measured after this year; so far, we have 9 PhDs, 3 DPTs, 1 MD, and 2 PharmDs)

Just this month, **two more alumni defended their dissertations: Dr. Sarah Wicks** (Duke, Chemistry, Mentors: Dr. Robin Lammi & Dr. Jay Hanna) **and Dr. Lauren Green** (Notre Dame, Biology, Mentor: Dr. Matt Stern).

**Please brag with us.** The support our McNair program receives from the entire Winthrop community means all of Winthrop has earned the right to brag about Winthrop McNair Scholars' research and graduate degree accomplishments. We appreciate that Winthrop faculty, staff, Directors, Chairs, Deans, and senior leaders step up throughout the year to directly or indirectly support Winthrop's McNair Scholars. We are also grateful to the entire SAEOPP research conference team that ensures our students are informed, inspired, and celebrated.

**Please help us recruit** the next cohort of new McNair Scholars by encouraging strong undergraduates at Winthrop and other SC universities to learn about the program at <https://www.winthrop.edu/mcnair/> and determine if it is a good fit for their post-baccalaureate goals. Each year, applications are accepted between Labor Day and fall break. Students can find out if they are eligible by completing the online survey at:

[https://winthrop.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6u1X4QsUMXtoRE1?Q\\_JFE=qdg](https://winthrop.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6u1X4QsUMXtoRE1?Q_JFE=qdg).

Sincerely,

*Cheryl Fortner-Wood, Ph.D.*  
**Proud Director, McNair Scholars Program**  
**Professor of Psychology**  
**Winthrop University**

