Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program

2018-2019 Application

118 College Drive #5024

Hattiesburg, MS 39406

601-266-6544

### Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is a federally funded TRIO program funded at 151 institutions across the United States and Puerto Rico by the U.S. Department of Education. It is designed to prepare undergraduate students for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. McNair participants are either first-generation college students with financial need, or members of a group that is traditionally underrepresented in graduate education and have demonstrated strong academic potential. The goal of the McNair Scholars Program is to increase graduate degree awards for students from underrepresented segments of society.

*Ronald E. McNair, Ph.D.*

*Ronald Erwin McNair was born October 21, 1950 in Lake City, South Carolina. While in junior high school, Dr. McNair was inspired to work hard and persevere in his studies by his family and by a teacher who recognized his scientific potential and believed in him. Dr. McNair graduated as valedictorian from Carver High School in 1967. In 1971, he graduated magna cum laude and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from North Carolina A&T State University (Greensboro). Dr. McNair then enrolled in the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976, at the age of 26, he earned his Ph.D. in laser physics. His dissertation was titled, “Energy Absorption and Vibrational Heating in Molecules Following Intense Laser Excitation.” Dr. McNair was presented an honorary doctorate of Laws from North Carolina A&T State University in 1978, an honorary doctorate of science from Morris College in 1980, and an honorary doctorate of science from the University of South Carolina in 1984.*

*While working as a staff physicist with Hughes Research Laboratory, Dr. McNair soon became a recognized expert in laser physics. His many distinctions include being a Presidential Scholar (1971-74), a Ford Foundation Fellow (1971-74), a National Fellowship Fund Fellow (1974-75), and a NATO Fellow (1975). He was also a sixth degree black belt in karate and an accomplished saxophonist. Because of his many accomplishments, he was selected by NASA for the space shuttle program in 1978. His first space shuttle mission launched successfully from Kennedy Space Center on February 3, 1984. Dr. Ronald E. McNair was the second African American to fly in space. Two years later he was selected to serve as mission specialist aboard the ill-fated U.S. Challenger space shuttle. He was killed instantly when the Challenger exploded one minute, thirteen seconds after it was launched. Dr. McNair was posthumously awarded the Congressional Space Medal of Honor. After his death in the Challenger Space Shuttle accident on January 28, 1986, members of Congress provided funding for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Their goal was to encourage low-income and first-generation college students, and students from historically underrepresented ethnic groups to expand their educational opportunities by enrolling in a Ph.D. program and ultimately pursue an academic career. This program is dedicated to the high standards of achievement inspired by Dr. McNair’s life.*

[*Source: http://mcnairscholars.com/about/*](http://mcnairscholars.com/about/)

*“Whether or not you reach your goals in life depends entirely on how well you prepare for them and how badly you want them. You're eagles! Stretch your wings and fly to the sky.”*

*―Ronald McNair (Read more* [*at http://izquotes.com/quote/347705)*](http://izquotes.com/quote/347705))

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Must be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or meets the residency requirements for federal student financial assistance.
2. Is currently enrolled at The University of Southern Mississippi in a degree program and
   1. is classified as a low-income individual (you fall within one of the income brackets listed below) who is a first generation college student (neither of your parent(s)/guardian(s) have earned a four-year college degree), or
   2. is a member of a group that is underrepresented in graduate education (African American, Hispanic, Native American or American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiians, Native American Pacific Islanders).

(Note: You must be BOTH a first-generation college student and have an income that is under the family taxable income level below to be considered eligible under the category "a" above.

1. Must have junior standing (60 credit hours) by spring 2019.
2. Graduation date must be fall 2019 or later.

Current-Year Immediate Household Size & Low Income Levels (Size of Family Unit Family Taxable Income)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 member = $18,210 | 2 members = $24,690 | 3 members = $31,170 | 4 members =$37,650 |
| 5 members = $44,130 | 6 members = $50,610 | 7 members = $57,090 | 8 members = $63,570 |

For family units with more than eight members, add the following amount for each additional family member: $6,480 for the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia and outlying jurisdictions.

*The term "low-income individual" means an individual whose family taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the poverty level amount. The figures shown under family income represent amounts equal to 150% of the family income levels established by the Census Bureau for determining poverty status. The poverty guidelines were published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Federal Register on January 18, 2018.*



#### Dear Applicant:

**Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program**

118 College Drive #5024 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.4369 | Fax: 601.266.5138 | [www.usm.edu/graduateschool](http://www.usm.edu/graduateschool)

Applications are now being accepted for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is a federally funded project designed to increase the number of underrepresented individuals pursuing doctoral study by offering juniors and seniors the opportunity to explore an area of interest through involvement in research, faculty mentoring, and other scholarly activities while developing the technical and conceptual skills that are critical to success in graduate school. Scholars are expected to enroll in graduate programs and eventually complete a doctoral degree.

The research objectives of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program are substantial and require a full-time commitment from the scholar. At the end of the Summer Program, each scholar will be required to give an oral presentation and submit a research paper. Scholars are obligated to attend a program orientation, weekly scheduled meetings, field research, workshops, conferences, and Graduate School events. In addition, Scholars will be required to enroll in mandatory program courses during the summer term.

Program features:

* Provides a $2,800 stipend
* Provides a scholarship to pay for a portion of summer housing and tuition
* Provides Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Prep Course
* Provides assistance in preparing for application and entrance into a graduate program within their field of study
* Provides faculty mentor within the student's field of study
* Provides opportunities to network with graduate students
* Provides opportunities for scholars to design and engage in research and attend professional meetings in their disciplines

If you feel you meet eligibility requirements, we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to develop the skills that are necessary in graduate school. If you would like additional information, please contact us via phone or E-mail as shown below.

Sincerely,

*Carolyn Cawthon Kim S. Brown*

#### Carolyn J. Cawthon, Director Kim Brown, Assistant Director

Graduate School - McCain Library room 211 Graduate School - McCain Library room 100

Phone: 601-266-4793 601-266-6544

[Carolyn.Cawthon@usm.edu](mailto:Carolyn.Cawthon@usm.edu) [Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu](mailto:Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu)

Required Documents:

1. McNair Scholars Program Application
2. Most recent federal income tax return from parent/guardian or self (if you are classified as independent)
3. Two letters of recommendation
4. Statement of Purpose and Research Experience
5. Writing Sample
6. Resume

PRIORITY DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ALL MATERIALS: Friday, October 5, 2018 (5:00 p.m.)

**McNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

#### 118 College Drive #5024 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.4369 | Fax: 601.266.5138 | [www.usm.edu/graduateschool](http://www.usm.edu/graduateschool)

Application Form

Please complete this application and return it along with your Statement of Purpose and Research Experience, a writing sample, resume, and income tax forms. In the event USM does not have a copy of a transcript as listed in the application, you will be asked to submit an official copy in order for the application to be processed. In addition, two (2) letters of recommendation must be provided. All forms should be returned to

Kim S. Brown, Assistant Director

The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate School / McNair Scholars Program

McCain Library - Room 100 \* 118 College Drive #5024 \* Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5024 DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ALL MATERIALS: Friday, October 5, 2018 (5:00 p.m.)

## Section 1: Applicant Information

### Social Security #

USM ID:

Last Name First Name Initial

Current Address

City, State, & Zip

Permanent Address

City, State, & Zip

USM Email

Secondary Email

Home Phone Number Cell Number

### Date of Birth:

Gender  Male  Female

Shirt Size:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ethnicity | African American/Black | American Indian/Alaskan Native | Asian | Hispanic |
|  | Multi-Racial | Native Hawaiian/Other Pacf Isl | White | Other |

If other, please specify

Citizenship  US Citizen  Perm Resident

If other, please specify

Do you have a disability?  Yes  No

**Section 2: Writing Sample**

*Please provide no more than four (4) pages of a sample of your writing. Use what you feel is the best demonstration of your academic writing ability (i.e., paper from a composition course, research paper, etc.).*

**Section 3: Statement of Purpose and Research Experience**

*On a separate sheet of paper, describe (1) your academic and research interests, (2) your educational and career goals, (3) how participation in the McNair Scholars Program will impact your educational and career goals, (4) your motivation for pursuing a doctoral degree, and (5) the contributions you wish to make in your field of study with a doctoral degree. Additionally, list any research experience you may have had below as well as describe any research experience you have gained in a university setting. Please include what you accomplished with your research. Your essay should be typed and saved in MS Word (.docx or .doc) or PDF format and attached to this application.*

***Your Statement of purpose and Research Experience should be a minimum of 500 words with a maximum of 1000 words (be sure to include your word count total at the end of your Statement of Purpose by clicking Insert > Quick Parts > Field. In the Field names list, click NumWords, and then click OK.)***

## Section 4: Previous Research Experience (if any)

### Area/Type of Research Mentor/Supervisor Name Location of Research Date(s)

**Section 5: Resume**

*Please provide a copy of your current resume. Be sure to include school leadership positions, memberships, honors and awards, and any community involvement.*

**Section 6: Family Information**

#### To determine eligibility, a copy of your parent's/guardian's federal income tax form (Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ), or, if independent, a copy of your personal federal income tax form (Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ) for the most recent year, should be included/attached to your application. If you cannot submit a recent tax form, you may attach a copy of your most recent FAFSA application; however, a federal income tax form will be required if accepted.

***Statement of Confidentiality*:** The information contained in this section of the application is for the purpose of determining the applicant's eligibility for the McNair Scholars Program. All information received will be kept confidential. If for any reason you are not accepted into the Program, your income information will be returned to you upon a written and signed request.

Father's (Guardian #1) Full Name

Father's (Guardian #1) highest level of schooling completed  Elementary 1-6  Secondary 7-12  Some College - No Degree

Associate's Degree Bachelor's Degree Masters’ Degree

Doctorate Degree MD, JD Degree

Mother's (Guardian #2) Full Name

Mother's (Guardian #1) highest level of schooling completed  Elementary 1-6  Secondary 7-12  Some College - No Degree

 Associate's Degree  Bachelor's Degree  Masters’ Degree  Doctorate Degree  MD, JD Degree

Does someone claim you as a dependent for federal tax purposes?  Yes  No

If you answered "yes" above, what is the name of that person and their relationship to you?

Are you legally independent or do you receive financial support from and/or live with your parents/guardian?  Legally Independent

 Live with parent/guardian

What is the number of individuals (including yourself) living in your family household?

If you are a dependent applicant (received support from parent(s) or guardian), and your parents/guardian filed a federal tax return for 2017, what is their TAXABLE income? (A copy of the tax form must be submitted with this application)

If you are an independent applicant (at least 24 years of age; or a veteran, orphan, married, or have dependents), and you filed a tax return for 2017, what is your TAXABLE income? (A copy of the tax form must be submitted with this application)

If you are your parents/guardian did not file a federal tax form, please explain why below. Please note: you will need to attach a copy of your most recent FAFSA application.

## Section 7: Educational Information

Name of High School High School graduation date

Did you attend a community college? Yes No

Name of Community College

Date of Attendance at Community College

First Date of Attendance at USM

Anticipated graduation date (semester/year)

Total credit hours earned Total credit hours currently registered for

Current College College of Arts & Sciences College of Business & Economic Development  College of Education & Human Sciences  College of Nursing & Health Professions

Current Academic Major

Academic Level

 Freshman  Sophomore

Junior Senior

Cumulative USM GPA Cumulative Major GPA

Upon the completion of your undergraduate degree, do you plan to apply to graduate school? Yes No Uncertain

Potential field of study for graduate study?

Ultimate academic goal Bachelor's Degree

 Master's Degree

If you answered "other" above, please explain

 Ph.D. or Ed.D. Medical or Law Degree

 OT or PT School Other

If selected for the program, you are required to have a faculty mentor for your research. Do you have any faculty members in mind to serve as a potential faculty mentor? Have you had any contact with them? Please be as specific as possible.

## Section 8: Letter of Recommendation #1

Applicant's Name: Applicant's ID#

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, known as the Buckley Amendment, gives students the right to inspect and review their educational records. You may, however, waive the right to see specific confidential letters.

It is my decision to waive my rights under the Buckley Amendment to examine this letter and understand that it will not be shared with me.

*not* waive my rights under the Buckley Amendment to examine letters of recommendation and understand it can be shared with me if so requested in writing.

Failure to sign or indicate waiver status indicates confidentiality (waiver) by default.

Applicant's Signature Date

Established and funded by the U.S. Department of Education and named in honor of Challenger space shuttle astronaut Dr. Ronald E. McNair, the McNair Scholars Program at The University of Southern Mississippi encourages graduate study by providing participants with a mentored research experience, seminars, field research, workshops on topics germane to the pursuit of the doctoral degree, and opportunities to meet with role models who have obtained the terminal degree.

The above named student has submitted an application to the McNair Scholars Program. In order for us to accurately assess the applicant's qualifications, please answer the following questions as fully as possible. Attach a separate sheet, if needed.

How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

In addition, the Selection Committee would greatly appreciate a statement that speaks to the applicant's experience and potential as a graduate student, researcher, and teacher. Please feel free to include any information that will give us a greater understanding of the applicant in the space provided.

Please use an

additional sheet if needed.

Very Good Good Fair Not Applicable

Academic potential Maturity

Readiness to work independently Commitment to academic and personal goals Follows directions

I consider the student to be  ready  ready if given assistance  not ready for graduate study and research.

Recommender Signature Date

Name (please print) Title

Email Address

Please return this completed recommendation NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2018 to: Kim S. Brown \* McNair Scholars Program \* 118 College Drive #5024 \* Hattiesburg, MS 39406 Questions: Contact [Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu](mailto:Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu) or 601-266-6544

## Section 8: Letter of Recommendation #2

Applicant's Name: Applicant's ID#

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, known as the Buckley Amendment, gives students the right to inspect and review their educational records. You may, however, waive the right to see specific confidential letters.

It is my decision to waive my rights under the Buckley Amendment to examine this letter and understand that it will not be shared with me.

*not* waive my rights under the Buckley Amendment to examine letters of recommendation and understand it can be shared with me if so requested in writing.

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additional sheet if needed.

Academic potential Maturity

Readiness to work independently Commitment to academic and personal goals Follows directions

Very Good Good

 



Fair Not Applicable



I consider the student to be  ready  ready if given assistance

not ready

for graduate study and research.

Recommender Signature Date

Name (please print) Title

Email Address

Please return this completed recommendation NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, October 5, 2018 to: Kim S. Brown \* McNair Scholars Program \* 118 College Drive #5024 \* Hattiesburg, MS 39406 Questions: Contact [Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu](mailto:Kimbaya.Brown@usm.edu) or 601-266-6544

# APPLICATION CHECKLIST

#### I have:

 Completed, signed, and dated Parts 1-6 of the application packet.

Requested letters of recommendation from at least two professors. The necessary recommendation forms are attached to this application. The recommendation forms should be given to two professors who can assess your aptitude for research and

 incentive to attend graduate school. Should this be unattainable, the recommendations may come from university administrators, instructors, counselors, or advisors who can comment on you as a student, your academic and scholarly activities, and discuss your motivation for completing graduate work.

 Signed, dated, and indicated confidentiality waiver status on the recommendation forms.

 Attached a copy of the most recent 2017 federal income tax forms (parent, guardian, or personal). Note: W2's are not acceptable.  Attached a copy of a writing sample.

 Attached a copy of my Statement of Purpose and Research Experience Attached a copy of my Resume