



## INTRODUCTION

For years, the McNair Scholars Program at UNH struggled to find eligible students to apply to the program. We sent letters, gave presentations (both in classrooms and at events) and worked with Student Support Services on our campus. Year after year, we extended our deadline until we fulfilled our recruitment numbers.

Then, during the fall of 2008, the McNair Scholars Program launched a pilot program called the **Pre-McNair Program**.

The idea was to start a sustainable recruiting program. It began by giving presentations to freshmen students within the first month of their fall semester and having interested students fill out a 1 page application to become a *Pre-McNair* student.

Pre-McNair is a one-year (non-committal) program to explore what it is like to be a McNair Scholar and is open to freshmen and sophomores, only. Students who maintain strong academic performance and who complete the Pre-McNair Program successfully may by-pass the traditional application process and be formally admitted to the McNair Scholars Program the following year.

Years later, we realized the program was more than just a recruiting tool. Early exposure to undergraduate research prepared students for becoming a McNair scholar, and in turn the formation of the cohort model created a sense of community among the students and improved retention rates.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Sustainable recruitment
2. Promote retention
3. Community building (students/programs)
4. Serves as a bridge to the McNair Scholars Program



# PRE-MCNAIR PROGRAM MORE THAN JUST A RECRUITING TOOL

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## RECRUITMENT MODEL:

### Cross-Collaborative Outreach with Programs who serve Underrepresented Freshmen and Sophomores

Pre-McNair Students are recruited between the months of late August through early October, annually. During the recruitment period, McNair staff members collaborate with three other student support programs on campus including the CONNECT program, Student Support Services (SSS), and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA). Collaborative efforts include Pre-McNair information sessions and frequent correspondence with program directors regarding eligible students who show interest and promise.

Since 2008 168 students have completed the Pre-McNair Program. Of the 168, there have been 31 who have become McNair Scholars, approximately 20%

On average 24 Pre-McNair students are recruited each year. Of the 24 recruited, 5 on average (20%), complete the requirements and are accepted into the McNair Scholars Program. One hundred percent of students accepted complete the program and graduate.

Composition of McNair Cohort 2008-Present					
McNair Cohort	Pre-McNair	%	Non Pre-McNair	%	Total
2010	3	15%	16	85%	19
2011	4	26%	11	74%	15
2012	4	33%	8	66%	12
2013	5	38%	8	62%	13
2014	9	75%	3	25%	12
2015	7	43%	9	57%	16



## PRE-MCNAIR PROGRAM BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS

One benefit of being a Pre-McNair Scholar is that the students who successfully complete the requirements of the one-year program will be offered admission to the McNair Scholars Program the following year without having to complete a full application (i.e. application form, statement of purpose, faculty recommendations, and interview). Additional benefits include access to a program advisor and student mentor and early exposure to undergraduate research by attending research seminars and workshops.

### Pre-McNair Requirements:

- *Attendance at the Pre-McNair Orientation (October).*
- *Meet with a McNair advisor each semester.* Depending on funding, a Graduate Assistant (GA) is typically hired to serve as the Pre-McNair Program Advisor.
- *Meet with a McNair Peer Mentor at least once in the Spring.* Current McNair Scholars are paired with Pre-McNair students to form a mentoring relationship.
- *Attend at least one Research Seminar in the Fall and Spring semesters.* There are three Research Seminars offered each semester. During the Seminars, current McNair Scholars present their research findings.
- *Attend at least one cultural/social event during the academic year.* Cultural and Social events are intended to increase a sense of community among McNair Scholars and Pre-McNair students.
- *Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA or better.*