

Nominate undergrads for McNair program

Greetings Fellow SOU folks:

When asked how they heard about the McNair Scholars Program, the majority of the students we serve have reported that they heard about the program from a SOU employee. Within our current context of this global pandemic and the aftermath of the Alameda fire, with most of our university activities being conducted on-line, I know your assistance is vitally important and so I am sending this email to ask you to help the SOU McNair program in our effort to make sure that undergraduate students are aware of the services that are available through the program.

One way to describe the SOU McNair Program is as a specialized graduate school preparatory program of activities and instruction that the participants engage in over a minimum of a calendar year. If you know any undergraduate students from freshmen with at least two terms of college completed, through students at the senior level, from any academic major, who you think may have academic potential and may want to go to attend graduate school after completing a bachelor's degree, please mention the program to the student and/or send an email to McNair@sou.edu to nominate that student to the SOU McNair Scholars Program.

To nominate a student please send the following information to McNair@sou.edu

1. the student's name,
2. student's SOU email address,
3. student's undergraduate major

Although the McNair program has federally defined eligibility criteria based on specific indicators, (for example, two-thirds of McNair [program, participants are students whose parents did not complete a bachelor's degree and are from a household with a relatively low-income in the previous year), I ask you not to be concerned with our program eligibility criteria in making your nominations, because I will personally contact every nominee to provide the details of the program. With that contact email I provide informational handouts: "What is Graduate School" and "A Timeline of Activities to Prepare for Graduate School" that are useful for any student who might have thought about going on to graduate school, and are particularly helpful for students who might not know much about graduate school at all. So, even if the student is not eligible to participate in the McNair program, when the student receives a "Congratulations! You have been nominated!" email the student receives an affirmation that the student's academic efforts and potential have been positively noticed, as well as receiving information that about graduate school that the student might not have known.

The first page in the McNair application packet is an eligibility worksheet that the student completes in advance of the application process to determine whether the student is eligible to participate in the federally funded program. If the student has any specific eligibility questions, the form encourages the student to contact the

McNair Program staff. The program serves students from any ethnic group, from all races, and any of the SOU academic majors.

The student participants in the nation's McNair programs are considered "targets of recruitment" for Graduate Admissions Officers. McNair Scholars are granted the opportunity to apply to graduate programs without having to pay an application fee, and often McNair Scholars receive admission offers that include a guarantee for all expenses to be paid and provide a generous stipend to live on. SOU has operated a successful McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program since 2003 and almost every undergraduate student participant has enrolled in and completed a graduate degree program. Each year, a few of our SOU McNair Scholars complete bachelor degrees and then head directly into fully funded doctoral programs with commitments of funding support for 5 or more years, totaling \$250,000 to \$350,000.

During this fall quarter application round we will fill the 2022 Cohort of SOU McNair Scholars. The .pdf of the application packet will be available beginning on October 6, 2021 at <https://inside.sou.edu/mcnair/application.html>

The deadline for submission of completed application packets for the 2022 McNair Cohort is November 10, 2021.

I look forward to receiving your nomination(s) and convey my sincere appreciation for your assistance in encouraging undergraduate students to consider how the SOU McNair Scholars Program might be able to assist them to achieve their aspirations.

Thank you for your time and for all of the work that you do for the students of SOU.

Dr. Dee Southard
Director, SOU Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program