MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

We are extremely proud to present our fifth issue of the Boise State McNair Scholars Research Journal. This journal is representative of the many accomplishments of our Scholars over the last two years and demonstrates the impressive achievements that result from serious collaborative efforts. These Scholars worked many hours in seminars with staff, with faculty mentors and each other in order to do the work necessary to turn graduate school into a reality in their lives.

This year’s graduates, as those of the past, have maintained a high standard for themselves. Their dedicated work has translated to high levels of success for our program which to date has delivered more than 75% of our Scholars to excellent graduate programs. It is fitting that all this effort culminates in deserved recognition of their work through this McNair Scholars Journal. We are especially proud to see the myriad ways these students have grown as researchers and scholars.

We also extend gratitude to faculty whose guidance and support has allowed our Scholars to grow in meaningful ways, while giving them the foundation to enter graduate school with confidence and solid research experience.

Gregory Martinez    David Hall

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BOB KUSTRA

Congratulations to all of the 2009 McNair Scholars for your achievements over the past year. In particular, I want to acknowledge the hard work and accomplishments of the senior Scholars whose research is represented in the papers in this publication. The papers contained in this volume represent a remarkable breadth of scholarship and mark the culmination of an extensive research experience for these promising academic talents at Boise State. I also want to recognize and thank all of the faculty mentors who have worked with our McNair Scholars. It is your patience, guidance, and encouragement that facilitates the transformation of these students into scholars.

The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program honors the memory and achievement of the late Dr. Ronald E. McNair, a physicist and NASA astronaut. Its goal is to encourage undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds to emulate the academic and professional accomplishments of Dr. McNair by facilitating their pursuit of doctoral degrees and academic careers in teaching and research. The research presented here signals the arrival of a new group of rising scholars who will carry their talents, enthusiasm, and hard work ahead into graduate programs here and across the country. The research and other experiences you have had as undergraduates and McNair Scholars at Boise State University are your first critical steps on this path. As you graduate and move on, I hope that you will continue to aspire, achieve, and pursue your dreams.

Again, Congratulations and Best Wishes,

Bob Kustra