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We are delighted to present the fourth edition of the Boise State McNair Scholars Research Journal. We first published this journal three years ago because we believed it was important, not only to engage scholars in undergraduate research, the primary goal of the McNair Program, but also to provide them an opportunity to get an early understanding of the critical role of publishing in graduate school and in future academic careers. This represents the first published piece for many of our students as they embark on the graduate school journey. In a sense, the McNair Journal is the final component of preparation the program provides to our undergraduates at Boise State University.

Now, toward the end of our fifth year as a program at Boise State University, we continue on this incredible journey of working with talented undergraduate scholars whose work you see produced in this volume. The research contained here demonstrates a significant accomplishment for each of these scholars and is the culmination of work that began approximately 20 months ago, with the bulk of research having been accomplished in the summer of 2007. Scholars worked hard. They spent considerable time with faculty mentors who provided important guidance during their research experience, consulted with them about numerous research issues, and helped them find academic conferences at which to present their work both regionally and nationally in order to lay a foundation for entering graduate school with confidence. The excellent research in this volume would not be possible without the involvement of these dedicated Boise State faculty.

Thanks are also in order to Memo Cordova, our dedicated Librarian, who gave incalculable library research guidance to our scholars; Meredith Grubbs, who kept us organized and edited and formatted the journal; Megan Stright, for her meaningful personal support of our students; and Helen Barnes, whose numerous contributions as our third professional staff member help make our program what it is, an excellent, life-changing program.

We are very proud to see how our students have grown as scholars and researchers. We believe the McNair Research Journal provides each of them a deserved recognition of their hard work.

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