

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025

12:00 PM – 4:00 PM

REGISTRATION

Conference Registration Desk - Main Concourse

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP BEGINS-TOWNE PLACE SUITES

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

SELF-GUIDED CAMPUS WALKING TOURS & CAMPUS DEPARTMENT VISITATIONS (HYBRID)

Walk to the main campus to explore the University of Maryland. Visit the main campus, academic and administrative buildings, and campus attractions.

Please arrange your individual or group department visits.

Contact info for all UMD academic departments and programs is as follows:

University of Maryland Academic Departments and Programs Info

<https://www.umd.edu/academic-departments-and-programs>



University of Maryland Virtual Campus Research & Cultural Tour

<https://go.umd.edu/ogdiumdtour>



African-American History and the University of Maryland: A Campus Landmark Tour

<https://go.umd.edu/umdaahisttour>



Shuttle Service Schedule

<https://go.umd.edu/mcnairshuttle>



2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

4:00 PM – 5:45 PM

OPENING SESSION

Vessey Ballroom

WELCOME FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Mr. Fred Smith, Associate Program Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Co-Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

INTRODUCTION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Onyekachukwu Arah, McNair Scholar, Senior, Psychology Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Jerry L. Lewis, Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

INTRODUCTION OF DEAN

Mr. Jonathan Booker, McNair Scholar, Senior, Psychology Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

WELCOME FROM THE OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Dr. William A. Cohen, Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

Ms. Emily Guardado-Toledo, McNair Scholar, Junior, English Language Arts Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

OPENING SPEAKER

Dr. Hakeem Oluseyi, Research Professor, Astrophysicist, and TV personality
George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia

MCNAIR SCHOLARS PLEDGE

Led by **Dr. LaToya Walters**, Director, McNair Scholars Program
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

McNair Scholar Chidinma Okeke, Senior, Psychology Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

McNair Scholar Kerdeem Nurse-Farrell, Senior, Physics Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

McNair Scholar Briana Garcia, Senior, Government and Politics Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

McNair Scholar Cansu Erkan, Senior, Psychology Major
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

The Pledge is at the front of the Conference Proceedings Book. Please stand.

TRANSITION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Fred Smith, Associate Program Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Co-Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

5:45 PM – 8:00 PM

SCHOLARS' RECEPTION
CO-SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Chesapeake Ballroom

WELCOME FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Introduction of Speaker

Dr. Jerry L. Lewis, Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Reception Welcome Address

Dr. Georgina Dodge, Vice President, Office of Diversity and Inclusion University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

UNIVERSITY ROLL CALL - TRANSITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. LaToya Walters, Director, McNair Scholars Program University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

8:00 PM – 12:00 AM

HOTELS SHUTTLE LOOP RESUMES FROM-COLLEGE PARK MARIOTT

8:30 PM – 11:30 PM

TERPZONE SHUTTLE SERVICE BEGINS-COLLEGE PARK MARIOTT

9:00 PM – 11:00 PM

NETWORKING SOCIAL: BOWLING, BILLIARDS/POOL & VIDEO GAMES
SPONSORED BY VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

(A Separate Shuttle to the TerpZone departs the hotel lobby at 8:30 PM)
Stamp Student Union - Enjoy a night of bowling, billiards/pool, and basketball games on big-screen TVs, fellowship, music, and light refreshments. The last shuttle departs for the hotel at 11:00 PM.

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP BEGINS-HOTELS-TOWNE PLACE SUITES

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM

REGISTRATION

Conference Registration Desk - Main Concourse

7:00 AM – 7:30 AM

POSTER PRESENTATION SET-UP

Vessey Ballroom

Presentations are organized alphabetically by the presenter's last name. Please locate your assigned table based on your assigned number in the Vessey Ballroom. **Poster set-up 7:00 AM – 7:45 AM and displayed through 4:15 PM.**

7:45 AM – 9:20 AM

GENERAL SESSION AND BREAKFAST

Chesapeake Room A, B, & C

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

DEAN'S PANEL

MODERATOR - CALL TO ORDER AND PRESIDING

Dr. Susan M. Rivera, Dean, College of Behavioral & Social Sciences
Professor, Department of Psychology
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

PANELISTS

Dr. Mary Ellen Mahoney, Assistant Vice President and Dean,
Graduate School, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Stephen Roth, Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate School,
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Dr. Terri Adams, Associate Dean Graduate School - Deputy Director,
NCAS-M Director, Howard University Initiative on Public Opinion: Professor,
Department of Sociology and Criminology, Howard University, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Raymond Herrera, Associate Vice Provost, Dean, Graduate School,
PI/Director, McNair Scholars Program
Washington State University, Pullman, Washington

TRANSITION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. LaToya Walters, Director, McNair Scholars Program
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

9:30 AM - 10:45 AM

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION (McNair Directors and Staff)

Patuxent Room

INTRODUCTION AND MODERATOR

Dr. Jerry L. Lewis, Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

WORKSHOP SERIES

MCNAIR GRADUATE STUDENT PANEL

Room 2110-2111

MODERATOR

Dr. Nicholas C. Smith, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology;
Affiliate Faculty, Maryland Population Research Center and the Department of
African American Studies
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

PANELISTS

Javon Goard, Ph.D. student, Johns Hopkins University School of Education
McNair Alumni: University of Maryland, College Park

Elizabeth Solis, MPP student, University of Maryland School of Public Policy
McNair Alumni: Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

WORKSHOP SERIES CONTINUED

Andrew Lowe Mohammed, Ph.D. student, University of Maryland
School of Communication, Rhetoric, & Political Culture, McNair Graduate Fellow
McNair Alumni: University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Erin Green, Ph.D. Candidate in English, University of Maryland
McNair Graduate Fellow
McNair Alumni: University of Montevallo, Montevallo, Alabama

**GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS FOR Ph.D. APPLICANTS – OPPORTUNITIES
AND STRATEGIES (STEM FOCUS) – Morning Session Only**
Room 2115

PRESENTER

Dr. Francis DuVinage, Director, National Scholarships Office
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

**RECLAIM YOUR CAREER AND LIFE: *I WOULD RATHER DIE
DANCING THAN SITTING AT MY DESK***
Room 2101-2102

PRESENTER

Dr. Marcal Graham, Director, Educational Opportunity Center
Author of *MOVEME*
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

HOW TO FULLY FUND YOUR Ph.D.
Room 2116

PRESENTER

Dr. Vicki Johnson, Fellowship & Graduate Admission Expert
Founder & CEO ProFellow, Inc.
Portland, Oregon

**STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING A COMPETITIVE GRADUATE
SCHOOL PERSONAL STATEMENT**
Room 2106

PRESENTER

Mr. Brent Hernandez, Director, Graduate Student Services
The Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

UNDERSTANDING THE LITERATURE REVIEW
Room 2112

PRESENTER

Dr. Linda C. Macri, Director, Academic and Professional Development
The Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESEARCH

Room 2104

PRESENTER

Dr. Jessica Vitak, Director, PhD Information Studies; HCIL Affiliate Professor
Communication Department and Joint Program in Survey Methodology
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR

CO-SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK GRADUATE SCHOOL

Chesapeake Main Foyer & Art Gallery (Lower Level)

12:45 PM – 2:30 PM

GENERAL SESSION AND LUNCHEON

Chesapeake Room A, B, & C

COLLEGE PRESIDENTS' CONVERSATION: MCNAIR SCHOLARS AND THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

MODERATOR-CALL TO ORDER AND PRESIDING

Dr. Traki L. Taylor, Provost Emeritus, Frostburg State University
Frostburg, Maryland

PANELISTS

Dr. Darryl J. Pines, President, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Dr. Fernando Delgado, President, Lehman College-City University of New York
Bronx, New York

Dr. Mark Ginsberg, President, Towson University, Towson, Maryland

Dr. DeRionne Pollard, President, Nevada State University, Henderson, Nevada

2:45 PM – 4:15 PM

STUDENT RESEARCH POSTER PRESENTATIONS SPONSORED BY BURROUGHS WELCOME FUND

(POSTER GALLERY) - Vessey Ballroom

Presentations are organized alphabetically by the presenter's last name.

**Poster set-up 7:00 AM – 7:45 AM and displayed
through 4:15 PM.** An evaluator will critique posters.

Please break down poster presentations at 4:15 PM.

Poster boards and binder clips are on each Vessey Ballroom table.

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

WORKSHOP SERIES

MCNAIR GRADUATE STUDENT PANEL

Room 2110-2111

MODERATOR

Dr. Nicholas C. Smith, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
Affiliate Faculty, Maryland Population Research Center and the Department of
African American Studies
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

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PANELISTS

Javon Goard, Ph.D. student, Johns Hopkins University School of Education
McNair Alumni: University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Elizabeth Solis, MPP student, University of Maryland School of Public Policy
McNair Alumni: Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan

Andrew Lowe Mohammed, Ph.D. student, University of Maryland
School of Communication, Rhetoric, & Political Culture-McNair Graduate Fellow
McNair Alumni: University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Omoleye Adeyemi, Ph.D. student, University of Maryland
School of Communication, Rhetoric, & Political Culture, McNair Graduate Fellow
McNair Alumni: University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING: STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN THE POST-COVID COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

PM Only

Room 2115

PRESENTER

Dr. Alex Agiliga, Staff Psychologist
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

RECLAIM YOUR CAREER AND LIFE: *I WOULD RATHER DIE DANCING THAN SITTING AT MY DESK*

Room 2101-2102

PRESENTER

Dr. Marcal Graham, Director, Educational Opportunity Center
Author of *MOVEME*
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

HOW TO FULLY FUND YOUR Ph.D.

Room 2116

PRESENTER

Dr. Vicki Johnson, Fellowship & Graduate Admission Expert
Founder & CEO ProFellow, Inc.
Portland, Oregon

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING A COMPETITIVE GRADUATE SCHOOL PERSONAL STATEMENT

Room 2106

PRESENTER

Mr. Brent Hernandez, Director, Graduate Student Services
The Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

UNDERSTANDING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Room 2112

PRESENTER

Dr. Linda C. Macri, Director, Academic and Professional Development
The Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESEARCH

Room 2104

PRESENTER

Dr. Jessica Vitak, Director, Ph.D. Information Studies; HCIL Affiliate Professor
Communication Department and Joint Program in Survey Methodology
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

5:30 PM – 12:00 AM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP RESUMES-COLLEGE PARK MARIOTT

7:00 PM – 9:15 PM

THE SCHOLARS' BANQUET

Chesapeake Room A, B, & C – (*Elegant Attire: Suit/Tie/Cocktail Dress/Pantsuit*)

PRESIDING & INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Mr. Fred Smith, Associate Program Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Co-Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Chelsey Green, The Green Project
Associate Professor, Strings Department, Berklee College of Music,
Boston, Massachusetts

CLOSING REMARKS & TRANSITION

Mr. Fred Smith, Associate Program Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Co-Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

9:30 PM – 12:00 AM

SCHOLARS PARTY with D.J.

Patuxent Room - Light Refreshments Provided

9:30 PM – 10:30 PM

MCNAIR STAFF FELLOWSHIP (Refreshments will be served)

SPONSORED BY THE HOWARD HUGHES MEDICAL INSTITUTE

Lower Level Art Gallery

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2025

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP BEGINS-HOTELS-TOWNE PLACE SUITES

7:30 AM – 1:30 PM

REGISTRATION

Conference Registration Desk - Main Concourse

7:45 AM – 9:00 AM

GENERAL SESSION AND BREAKFAST

Chesapeake Room A, B, & C

CALL TO ORDER AND PRESIDING

Dr. LaToya Walters, Director, McNair Scholars Program
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

THE PROOF IS IN THE PANEL: MCNAIR SCHOLARS' SUCCESS STORIES

INTRODUCTION & MODERATOR

Dr. Christopher Travers, Visiting Clinical Professor
Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education,
College of Education-University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland
McNair Alumni, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

PANELISTS

Dr. Jose Centeno-Melendez, Historian
National Museum of American History-Washington, D.C.
McNair Scholar Alumni, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Dr. Nichole Margarita Garcia, Associate Professor
Department of Higher Education and College Student Affairs
Graduate School of Education-Rutgers University-New Brunswick, New Jersey
McNair Alumni, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

Dr. Chinyere Osuji, Associate Professor
Department of African American Studies: College of Behavioral & Social Sciences
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland
McNair Scholar Alumni, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

Dr. Yixin Ren, Senior Material Scientist
Bureau of Engraving and Printing
Washington, D.C.
McNair Scholar Alumni, University of Buffalo, Buffalo, New York

EVALUATIONS

Dr. LaToya Walters, Director, McNair Scholars Program
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

TRANSITION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. LaToya Walters, Director, McNair Scholars Program
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

9:15 AM- 12:45 PM

ORAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME & THE HOWARD HUGHES MEDICAL INSTITUTE

(Student Room Assignments are located in the Conference Proceedings Book)

LUNCH AND DINNER ON YOUR OWN

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP RESUMES-COLLEGE PARK MARIOTT

1:30 PM

Bus Tour to Washington D.C. (Prior registration required)

DEPARTING FROM COLLEGE PARK MARIOTT

1:30 PM – 9:30 PM

LUNCH AND DINNER ON YOUR OWN

GUIDED WALKING TOUR OF THE NATIONAL MONUMENTS

(Prior registration required)-The bus to Washington, D.C., departs from the hotel lobby at 1:30 PM and leaves DC for the hotel at 9:30 PM. Explore Washington, D.C., Shop, Dine, & Visit Museums. The coach bus will drop off and pick up registrants at the National African American Museum, Washington, D.C.

2025 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

THE NATIONAL MCNAIR SCHOLARS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025

8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

SHUTTLE SERVICE LOOP BEGINS-HOTELS-TOWNE PLACE SUITES

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

CLOSING SESSION AND BREAKFAST

Chesapeake Room A & B

CALL TO ORDER, PRESIDING, AND COMMENTS

Mr. Fred Smith, Associate Program Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Co-Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

OPEN MIC: CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

Conference Attendees

OPEN MIC: CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS & ENCOURAGEMENT

McNair Scholars Directors and Staff

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: GIVE-A-WAYS

CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Jerry L. Lewis, Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs
Chair, National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference
University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland