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One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 230 • Washington, DC 20036-1173  
Telephone (202) 223-3791 • Fax (202) 331-7157 • www.cgsnet.org

May 29, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE.: Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations for the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program**

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Cochran,

I am writing to urge you to increase support for the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, one of the eight TRIO programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

The McNair program prepares students with strong academic potential from disadvantaged backgrounds for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Universities participating in the McNair program work closely with students to encourage their pursuit of graduate studies, and closely track the students' progress through successful completion of one or more advanced degrees. Institutions provide academic counseling, financial assistance, mentoring, and research opportunities as well as summer internships, seminars, and tutoring. The McNair program has demonstrated success in encouraging and supporting low-income and first-generation students to pursue and complete Ph.D.s.

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) has long worked with the Council for Opportunity in Education and others to support the McNair program and its scholars by providing information to graduate deans and fellowship coordinators so they may contact McNair Scholars and recruit these motivated students to their institutions. In addition, many institutions waive graduate application fees for McNair Scholars.

CGS supports this program and is proud of the graduates who are its greatest success stories. Each time a McNair Scholar receives an advanced degree, it is not only a success for the graduate but for our entire country.

We respectfully request an increase of \$3 million for the McNair program to ameliorate the reduction from two consecutive years of decreases. Funding in FY 07 was \$45.6 million, \$44.3 million in FY 08, and \$44.1 million is expected in FY 09 funding.

Additional support for the McNair in the FY 2010 budget request will make a difference in preparing the highly skilled workforce and in promoting diversity of that workforce. Particularly in this economic climate, removing barriers so that more deserving students can receive the support and financial assistance necessary to overcome cultural or social obstacles to higher education is more important than ever.

Sincerely,

Debra W. Stewart  
President

cc: Members of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

**AFFILIATES**

Conference  
of Southern  
Graduate Schools

Northeastern  
Association  
of Graduate Schools

Midwestern  
Association  
of Graduate Schools

Western  
Association  
of Graduate Schools



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May 29, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiaht  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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