

**Message from the Associate Dean of Students and
University TRIO Director**

Dear Colleagues, Supporters, Partners, Faculty, and Friends:

I am delighted to share with you the latest edition of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign TRIO McNair Scholars Undergraduate Research Journal of Abstracts. The young scholars have worked with a faculty or research mentor to learn how to develop and implement quality and relevant research in their respective fields. The scholars' research is the result of applying creative ideas to research questions using systematic and rigorous methods of established research protocols in the STEM fields, the social sciences, and the humanities.

The TRIO McNair Scholars Program is a federally-funded program that provides research opportunities to first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented undergraduates to prepare them for graduate schools, faculty positions, and research careers. By combining undergraduate research with mentoring and academic support services, the program paves the way to graduate school for students who are underrepresented in higher education. Since 1990, the program has been an important asset and contribution to the research culture on the campus. More than 400 students have benefited from services and opportunities. More than 60 percent of our scholars are typically accepted into graduate schools each year and over 70 scholars have attained their Ph.D. or other doctoral degree since 1990.

We are very proud of the success of our scholars and alumni/ae scholars. We envision them as leaders in their respective fields. Congratulations to the McNair scholars and their mentors. I also extend my appreciation to the McNair staff for their dedication and for helping the next generation of scholars, scientists, faculty, and leaders achieve success.

With warm regards,



Wallace Southerland III, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Students and Project Director