



# Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program:

## 2002–05 Facts and Figures at a Glance

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### Background

The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement (McNair) Program is one of the U.S. Department of Education–funded TRIO Programs, a group of eight outreach programs designed to support and assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to attainment of a postbaccalaureate degree.

The McNair Program funds four-year postsecondary institutions to increase the number of doctoral degrees earned by students from underrepresented populations. Institutions work closely with McNair participants as they complete their undergraduate requirements to encourage them to enroll in graduate programs and to track their progress through to the successful completion of advanced degrees. The first McNair grantees were funded in 1989, with grant competitions currently held every four years. All grants are awarded on a four-year cycle, except for the institutions that score in the top 10 percent of each competition. These grants are awarded for five years.

### Data Sources

Grantees funded by the McNair Program are required to submit an annual performance report (APR) on the activities conducted during the academic year (from September of the current year to August of the next year). Some of the data presented in this document are based on APRs from both the current (2003–07) and the previous funding cycles (1999–2003). Sixteen of the grantees funded

under the previous cycle were discontinued in the current cycle and thus data are not available for them from any part of that cycle. As a result, measures such as the percentage of participants who received a bachelor's degree in academic year 2002–03 and enrolled in a graduate program in the fall of academic year 2003–04 were underestimated. While the bachelor's degree recipients from these discontinued grantees were counted as the cohort eligible to enroll in a graduate program, the enrollment status of these participants was not reported in the following year. Furthermore, the 2003–04 APR was substantially revised to improve data collection. More than 20 new data fields were added and the definitions of a few existing data fields were revised. Some of the fluctuations in the trend data may reflect these revisions in the APR.

### Future Reporting

This document highlights the key characteristics of the McNair Program, its grantees, its student participants, and the participants' academic achievements as reported in the APR through the 2004–05 reporting year. Reporting year 2003–04 was the beginning of a new four-year funding cycle (2003–07) for the McNair Program. When the four-year cycle is completed, the TRIO Programs will prepare a more extensive report, which will cover the entire funding cycle from 2003 through 2007 as well as comparison data from the last years of the previous program cycle.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reports from previous funding cycles: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, *A Profile of the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program, 1997–98 Through 2001–02*, Washington, D.C., 2005; and *A Profile of the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program: 1999–2000*, Washington, D.C., 2002

## Program Funding

The total program funding increased from \$38.4 million in 2002–03 to \$42.1 million in 2004–05. The number of grantees also increased from 156 in 2002–03 (last year of the 1999–2003 funding cycle) to 179 in 2003–04 (first year of the current funding cycle). (See Table 1.)

In the 2003–07 funding cycle, 22 percent of grantees were new and 78 percent had received funding in the 1999–2003 funding cycle. In addition, 10 percent of the grantees funded in the previous cycle did not receive funding in the 2003–07 funding cycle. (See Table 2.)

## Characteristics of McNair Grantees

The distribution in the type of institution and minority status participation among the grantees remained stable between the two funding cycles. In both funding cycles, 78 percent were public four-year institutions and 22 percent were private four-year institutions. The majority of grantees (82 percent) were non-minority institutions, while 8 percent were Historically Black Colleges and Universities and 10 percent were Hispanic-Serving Institutions. (See Table 3.)

**Table 1. McNair Program funding, by number of grantees funded, number of participants funded to serve, average project award, amount per participant funded to serve, and average number funded to serve: 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05**

Funding profile	Program year		
	2002–03	2003–04*	2004–05
Total program funding	\$38,357,300	\$41,885,612	\$42,092,721
Number of grantees funded	156	179	179
Number of participants funded to serve	3,738	4,248	4,256
Average project award	\$245,880	\$233,998	\$235,155
Amount per participant funded to serve	\$10,261	\$9,860	\$9,890
Average number of participants funded to serve	24	24	24

SOURCE: Data from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05.

\*The McNair Program began a new four-year funding cycle in 2003–04, which goes through 2007.

**Table 2. Number and percentage of McNair grantees and participants for the new 2003–07 cycle, continuing from the 1999–2003 cycle, and discontinued in the 2003–07 cycle**

Project continuation status	Grantees		Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
New grantees <sup>a</sup>	39	21.8 <sup>d</sup>	828	4.0 <sup>f</sup>
Continuing grantees <sup>b</sup>	140	78.2	19,984	96.0
Discontinued grantees <sup>c</sup>	16	10.3 <sup>e</sup>	1,624	7.5 <sup>g</sup>

SOURCE: Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2002–03 and 2003–04.

<sup>a</sup>New grantees joined the McNair Program for the first time in the 2003–07 funding cycle and were not in the 1999–2003 funding cycle.

<sup>b</sup>Continuing grantees received funding in both the 1999–2003 and the 2003–07 funding cycles.

<sup>c</sup>Discontinued grantees received funding in the 1999–2003 funding cycle but did not receive funding in the 2003–07 funding cycle.

<sup>d</sup>The percentage is based on the number of new grantees (39) divided by the sum of new (39) and continuing grantees (140).

<sup>e</sup>The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of discontinued grantees (16) by the total number of grantees funded in the 1999–2003 funding cycle (156).

<sup>f</sup>The percentage is calculated as the number of participants from new grantees (828) divided by the sum of participants from new (828) and continuing grantees (19,984).

<sup>g</sup>The percentage is calculated as the number of participants from discontinued grantees (1,624) divided by the sum of participants from discontinued (1,624) and continuing grantees (19,984).

## Characteristics of Active Program Participants<sup>2</sup>

The distribution of active participants by gender, eligibility, and race/ethnicity remained relatively unchanged from 2002–03 to 2004–05. At least two-thirds of active participants were female, over two-thirds were low-income and first-generation, and less than one-third were from underrepresented groups.

Over 40 percent of the participants were African-Americans and about one-quarter of the participants were Hispanics. (See Table 4.)

<sup>2</sup>Active participants are defined as students who received McNair services in the reporting year.

**Table 3. Percentage of McNair grantees, by type and control of institution and minority-serving status: 1999–2003 and 2003–07\***

Institution characteristics	Funding cycle	
	1999–2003	2003–07*
<b>Type and control of institution</b>		
Public four-year	78.2	78.2
Private four-year	21.8	21.8
Total	100.0	100.0
<b>Minority-serving status</b>		
Historically Black Colleges and Universities	8.3	7.8
Hispanic-Serving Institutions	10.3	10.1
Non-minority status institutions	81.4	82.1
Total	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Data from the program files of the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05.

\*The McNair Program began a new four-year funding cycle in 2003–04, which goes through 2007.

**Table 4. Percentage of McNair active participants<sup>a</sup>, by select characteristics: 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05**

Participant Characteristics	Program year		
	2002–03	2003–04 <sup>b</sup>	2004–05
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	67.3	68.1	68.2
Male	32.7	31.9	31.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Eligibility status</b>			
Low-income and first-generation <sup>c</sup>	69.6	71.2	71.3
Underrepresented minorities <sup>d</sup>	30.4	28.8	28.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>			
American Indian/Alaska Native	3.9	2.8	3.0
Asian	4.6	5.1	4.9
Black/African-American	45.0	44.5	43.3
Hispanic or Latino	26.0	23.9	24.1
White	17.2	20.9	21.2
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1.1	0.7	1.0
More than one race	2.2	2.1	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9

SOURCE: Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2002–03, 2003–04, and 2004–05.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>a</sup>Active participants are defined as students who received McNair services in the reporting year.

<sup>b</sup>The McNair Program began a new four-year funding cycle in 2003–04, which goes through 2007.

<sup>c</sup>A low-income participant is defined as a participant whose family's taxable income did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level in the calendar year preceding the year in which the individual initially received services. A first-generation college student is defined as a student from a family in which neither parent (whether natural or adoptive) received a baccalaureate degree or a student who, prior to the age of 18, regularly resided with and received support from only one natural or adoptive parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

<sup>d</sup>Underrepresented McNair participants are defined as African-American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

## Program Services

In 2004–05, program grantees offered a variety of activities to assist participants with entering and completing doctoral study. Close to 90 percent of active participants received academic counseling and mentoring and participated in various seminars and workshops. About 80 percent of active participants received assistance in applying to graduate school and in applying for financial aid. Other activities, such as test preparation, graduate school visits, and research activities, were also commonly used among active participants. (See Figure 1.)

## Program Outcomes

The goal of the McNair Program is to assist and support low-income, first-generation college students and those from groups underrepresented in pursuing doctoral studies. Enrolling in graduate school is a milestone in attaining that goal. Two empirical measures were used to calculate the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients who enrolled in graduate school immediately after their graduation.

### First Measure

The first measure used two APR data fields, enrollment status (enrolled in postsecondary education) and college grade level (current college grade level at the end of the academic year), to define graduate school enrollment. As illustrated in Figure 2, this rate increased from about 40 percent for students who graduated from an undergraduate program in 2000–01 to over

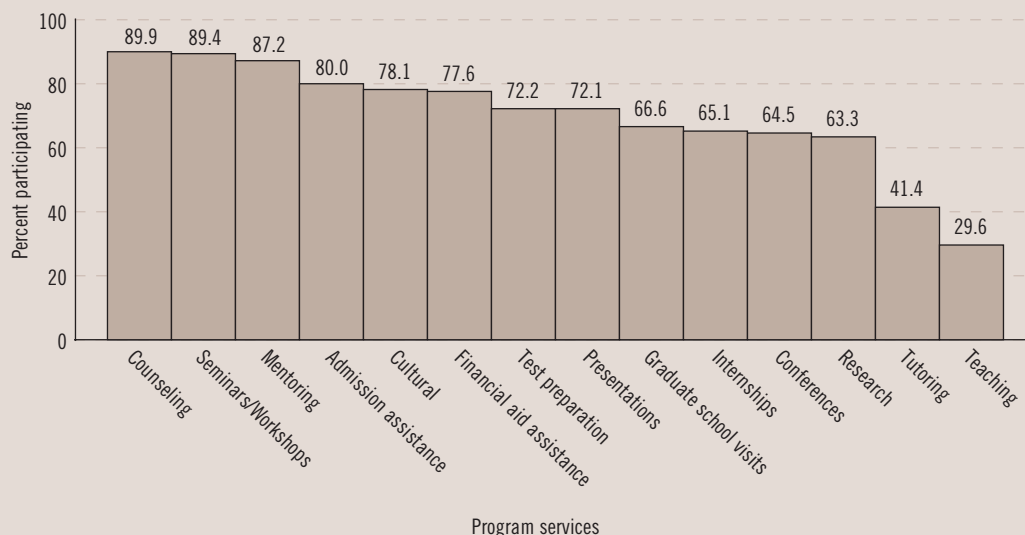
52 percent for students who graduated from an undergraduate program in 2003–04.

### Second Measure

The enrollment status field was one of the data fields redefined in the 2003–04 APR. To minimize reporting error introduced by this change, the second measure defined graduate school enrollment on the basis of college grade level only. Enrollment based on this measure, reported in the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* requirements, increased from about 40 percent for participants who graduated in 2000–01 to about 57 percent for participants who graduated in 2003–04 (see Figure 3).

For both measures used to define graduate school enrollment, the largest increase was found for participants who graduated in 2003–04. The result was affected by transition to a new funding cycle. Excluding the discontinued grantees from the 2002–03 cohort would reduce the increase by nearly one-third. Furthermore, the result could also be confounded by the redesigned APR, and by a new procedure, first implemented with the 2003–04 APR, that asks grantees to update and resolve data problems found by the Federal TRIO Programs. When they become available, the 2005–06 APRs will show whether the observed increases in the graduate school enrollment rates continued for the 2004–05 cohort.

**Figure 1. Percentage of McNair active participants, by select program services: 2004–05**



SOURCE: Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance report, 2004–05.

**Figure 2. Annual graduate school enrollment rate for McNair participants enrolling in graduate school immediately after receiving a bachelor’s degree, by graduation years 2000–01 through 2003–04\*, and measured by the APR fields “current college grade level” and “enrollment status”**



SOURCE: Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

NOTE: Graduate school enrollment rates for participants who graduated in academic years 2000–01 through 2001–02 were based on information from the previous funding cycle, including the 16 grantees whose funding was not renewed in the new funding cycle. The graduate school enrollment rate in 2003–04 for students who graduated in 2002–03 included the 16 discontinued grantees in the denominator but did not include the 2003–04 graduate school enrollment information in the numerator. For participants who graduated in 2003–04, the 2004–05 graduate school enrollment rate did not include students from the 16 discontinued grantees in either the denominator or the numerator.

\*The McNair Program began a new four-year funding cycle in 2003–04, which goes through 2007.

**Figure 3. Annual graduate school enrollment rate for McNair participants enrolling in graduate school immediately after receiving a bachelor’s degree, by graduation years 2000–01 through 2003–04\*, and reported as GPRA indicator and measured by the APR field “current college grade level”**



SOURCE: Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal TRIO Programs, Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program annual performance reports, 2000–01 through 2004–05.

NOTE: Graduate school enrollment rates for participants who graduated in academic years 2000–01 through 2001–02 were based on information from the previous funding cycle, including the 16 grantees whose funding was not renewed in the new funding cycle. The graduate school enrollment rate in 2003–04 for students who graduated in 2002–03 included the 16 discontinued grantees in the denominator but did not include the 2003–04 graduate school enrollment information in the numerator. For participants who graduated in 2003–04, the 2004–05 graduate school enrollment rate did not include students from the 16 discontinued grantees in either the denominator or the numerator.

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**U.S. Department of Education**

Margaret Spellings

*Secretary*

**Office of Postsecondary Education**

Diane Auer Jones

*Assistant Secretary*

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