

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Program Opportunities

**What opportunities does the McNair Scholars Program provide?** The program offers paid travel to conferences, stipends (up to \$2800) for scholarly work, assistance with the graduate school application process, opportunities to present research, networking events, participation in cultural activities, and guidance on financing your education and life goals.

**Will I receive funding as a McNair Scholar?** Yes, scholars receive funding for research or other scholarly activities, conference travel, and other opportunities in preparation for graduate level studies. Ok

## Time Commitments & Expectations

**What are the time commitments and expectations of McNair Scholars?** While there are no set minimum time commitments, expect to participate in a funded research and graduate school institute typically during the week leading up to the start of fall semester. During the academic year, expect to spend 2-3 hours monthly through individual and group activities. Additional time will be needed as you move closer to proposing, conducting, and presenting your funded independent research, creative or other scholarly activities.

## Application Process & Timing

**When is the application deadline for AY26-27?** The application deadline is March 31, 2026, with early decision notifications by April 15, 2026.

**What happens if I miss the March 31st deadline?** McNair considers applications throughout the year on a space available basis. Applying by the deadline maximizes your ability to qualify for opportunities and funding during the summer and into the next academic year.

**When is the best time to apply to the McNair Scholars Program?** While the ideal time to join McNair is halfway through completing your baccalaureate degree, prospective scholars may apply at any time during their undergraduate degree programs.

## Eligibility

**I'm not sure if I am eligible for McNair—how do I find out?** Eligibility is defined by the United States Congress in the [Code of Federal Regulations 647.3](#). Please reach out to Director [Sunny Mall](#) about McNair eligibility as well as research, scholarly and creative opportunities available to undergraduates, irrespective of McNair participation.

**How do I know if I'm first generation?** The term “first-generation college student” means an individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree prior to the student turning 18 or becoming emancipated. In the case of any individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one

parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree prior to the student turning 18 or becoming emancipated.

**How do I know if I'm a dependent or independent student?** If you are over the age of 24, you are an independent student. However, there are 15 alternate criteria that confer independent student status if you are under the age of 24. Please reach out to Director [Sunny Mall](#) for further clarification.

**How do I determine the number of people in my household?** If you are independent, include yourself, your spouse, and/or any other dependents. If you are a dependent, include yourself, your parent(s) or guardian(s), and all other dependents.

**What GPA do I need to apply?** The UAA McNair Scholars Program does not have a minimum GPA requirement. Applications are reviewed holistically, taking into account your academic performance along with other factors such as your research interests, life experiences, commitment to graduate education, and potential for scholarly achievement.

**I attend a UAA community campus. Am I still eligible to apply to McNair?** Yes.

**I'm pursuing a second bachelor's degree that better fits my graduate school focus. Am I still eligible to apply to McNair?** Yes.

**I'm still unsure about my eligibility. Can I still reach out?** Absolutely! Please contact Director [Sunny Mall](#) if you're interested in research, scholarly or other creative activities available to undergraduate students, including graduate school pathways.

## Time Commitments & Expectations

**What are the time commitments and expectations of McNair Scholars?** While there are no set minimum time commitments, expect to participate in a funded research and graduate school institute typically during the week leading up to the start of fall semester. During the academic year, expect to spend 2-3 hours monthly through individual and group activities. Additional time will be needed as you move closer to proposing, conducting, and presenting your funded independent research, creative or other scholarly activities. *Please note that the McNair Scholars Program individualizes opportunities to each scholar's goals and does not apply a one-size fit all approach!*

## General

**How do I learn more or apply?** Please review the McNair Scholars Program [website](#), [application](#) and [FAQs](#) or send an e-mail to Director [Sunny Mall](#) with your questions or to schedule an appointment to talk further.

**What if I have questions about research opportunities outside of McNair?** Director [Sunny Mall](#) is available to discuss research, scholarly and creative opportunities available to any undergraduate student, irrespective of McNair participation.

**Who was Dr. Ronald McNair?** Dr. Ronald McNair was a great mentor to many during his life, and UAA is lucky to have a scholars program to support activities that align with his values and kindness! Follow this link to learn more about the [Life and Legacy of Dr. Ronald E. McNair](#).

