

Kathleen Cargill, M.A., McNair Scholars Program Director, is from a low-income, first-generation background and was a non-traditional aged college student. She has 7 years of graduate school education and has directed the McNair Program successfully for 10 years. Her professional experience includes 14 months as a Student Support Services (SSS) Counselor and 5 years as a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor. As the first director of the McNair Program at CSS Ms. Cargill developed the innovative Phase System, a logical and easy-to-follow plan for participants to move from application through research to entrance into graduate school. A second innovation is the Strategic Plan for the Coordination of Special Programs at CSS, which allows McNair participants to complete one large project, composed of several sections, meeting the requirements of two or more academic programs. Third, she created an electronic database for effectively disseminating graduate program/scholarship/research/and fellowship information to McNair scholars. Fourth, Ms. Cargill and her team facilitate 10 annual workshops and 10 summer seminars designed to prepare participants for graduate application, graduate-level research, and the professional presentation of their research.

Ms. Cargill developed a network of faculty and administrative support within CSS as well as between CSS and the University of Minnesota - Duluth (UMD) for the McNair participants, and a second network of coordinated services between the CSS and the University of Wisconsin - Superior (UWS) McNair Programs. Interested faculty research mentors are oriented to the McNair Program and monitored as they mentor the participants.

Under Ms. Cargill's direction, the McNair Scholars Handbook is now a 100-page guide to the program's components: research, writing, professional presentation of research, professionalism, workshop descriptions, conferences and travel, mentoring, as well as a calendar of activities with program benchmarks and deadlines. McNair mentors, staff, and participants use the manual to track workshops and to review specific guidelines for conducting and presenting research and attending conferences. Other handbooks include: Mentors' Handbook and the Parents' Handbook.

In order to keep the McNair Program abreast of changes on the national and local educational level, Ms. Cargill uses a network of resources including: the MN ACE Network, the Council of Graduate Studies, the Council on Undergraduate Research (liaison), the COMPACT for Faculty Diversity, the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science (GEM), National Mentoring Association, the National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals, and the National Association of Fellowships Advisors (liaison), as well as the state, regional and national TRIO organizations. She is also a Fellow of the Society for Applied Anthropology and a member of the Minnesota College Personnel Association, the American Association of University Women, and the MN ACE Network.