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## Civic Engagement and Graduate Education

by Victor Bloomfield, Interim Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Research, University of Minnesota

### Introduction

Connection with the public -- civic engagement -- is crucial to the future of higher education, including graduate education.

Graduate education and the advanced research that accompanies it depend on public support. As our scholarship has become more specialized, and our enterprise larger and more expensive, we are in danger of losing public understanding and support. Higher education is increasingly looked on as a private good, and our research -- with the possible exception of biomedical research -- is viewed by large segments of the population as either irrelevant or designed to enrich large corporations. With some laudable exceptions, our faculty and students do not make personal contact with the general public in ways that enable the public to understand what we are doing and allow them to feel that they have a stake in our success. Unless the public perceives that research and the graduate education that makes it possible contribute to the public good, and affect them personally, we will continue to lose support.

It is not just administrators and faculty interested in improving graduate education who think that students need to make more connections between their scholarship and the real world. Graduate students themselves indicate the same desire (Cherwitz and Sievers, 2003). A Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate survey asked more than 2,000 graduate students in six disciplines what three things they would most like to see improved in their graduate experience. Learning more about the public issues addressed by the discipline ranked third of 21, after how to formulate and carry out teaching and research programs. Many students recognize that there are important and interesting issues in the world to which their discipline could and should make a contribution, but only if it looks outward as well as inward.

As Angelica M. Stacy, Professor of Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, wrote in Carnegie Essays on the Doctorate: Chemistry: "... students I have known have interests in biology, materials, environmental sciences, engineering, education, diversity, management, and public policy. They all identify themselves primarily as chemists, and this is where their main training lies. Yet, they seek projects and experiences outside the normal boundaries of the chemistry doctorate." And Cherwitz (2004; 2005) suggests that such a viewpoint may be key to attracting more minority students into graduate education.

### Sources of the civic engagement movement

The growing conversation in higher education about civic engage-

ment derives from several sources. These include the influential writings of Ernest Boyer, especially "Scholarship Reconsidered" (1990) and his follow-up article "The Scholarship of Engagement" (1996); Richard Cherwitz's "Intellectual Entrepreneurship" (IE) initiative (1997) and development of a "citizen-scholars" model of graduate education (Cherwitz and Sullivan, 2002); the call by the Kellogg Commission (2000) for public universities to renew their commitment to society; rethinking by public research universities of the meaning of their land grant missions, as rural populations have declined, corporations have displaced family farms, and the needy groups in society have become increasingly urban; pressures from business and government for universities to serve as "economic engines;" demands from NSF and other granting agencies that broader impacts and public involvement be considered in research grants; concern of universities in large cities about how to work with and serve their urban neighbors; recognition of trends in society away from community toward fragmented private purposes; student interest in activities, such as service learning, that serve society while garnering academic credit; and recognition by state universities that if they do not clarify and publicize the ways in which they benefit their states and regions, their shrinking share of state support may shrink even further.

### Studies of graduate education emphasize the need for more civic engagement

Greater civic engagement is needed at all levels of graduate education. However, perhaps the need has been articulated most forcefully -- because the gap with current reality is greatest -- in the numerous recent and ongoing projects examining doctoral education. A summary of Recommendations from National Studies on Doctoral Education (Nyquist and Wulff, 2000) has as the sixth of its major findings: "Produce scholar-citizens who see their special training connected more closely to the needs of society and the global economy. The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate (2004), which defines the purpose of doctoral education as "preparing stewards of the discipline," emphasizes communication with a wide variety of publics as one of three key capabilities of such a steward (Carnegie Foundation, 2004). And the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation Responsive Ph.D. Initiative (2004) urges that "... the goal of the doctorate [be] redefined as scholarly citizenship..."

### Definition of civic engagement

Up to this point we have used the con-

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cept of civic engagement without defining it. The CIC Committee on Engagement has adopted the following definition: "Engagement is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good." (Civic Engagement Benchmarking Task Force, 2005).

### Civic engagement and public scholarship

It is important to connect this definition of civic engagement to the concept of public scholarship: scholarship of value to the public and engaged with the public. Public scholarship falls into two main categories: "universal" and "local." The distinction between them is important for how universities do their business and for how they are perceived and supported by society.

Universal public scholarship is work that benefits humanity, but without a specific local context in mind: the Human Genome Project is a good example. There is little doubt that this project will lead to biomedical insights that will benefit people all over the world, but the benefits to people in any specific locality will be diffuse, long-term, and hard to identify. The values and reward systems associated with graduate education tend to favor research and scholarship of universal applicability.

Local public scholarship has four typical manifestations within universities: (1) applications of research such as traditional agricultural- and continuing education/extension-based work, and clinical applications of biomedical research in academic health centers; (2) teaching and research on social science and public policy issues such as housing, transportation, criminology, or the rural-urban interface; (3) K-12 and preschool projects; and (4) scholarship that is characterized by reciprocal engagement between researcher and community.

The distinctions between these two broad categories are not always neat. A new AIDS drug (universal), for example, might need adaptation to local conditions and attitudes before it can become an effective treatment. Conversely, the understanding of the factors influencing exposure of children to lead poisoning in a particular neighborhood (local) is likely to have broad consequences in many other communities.

Both universal and local public scholarship are important to civic life and community well-being, but only local public scholarship is generally recognized as such. Better understanding -- by both the public and university faculty and students -- of the engaged nature of universal public scholarship, and greater efforts to elucidate the local value of universal scholarship, are sorely needed.

### Civic engagement can enrich research and teaching

In some specialties, civically engaged research is not just desirable, it is also the best way to do research. For example, many clinicians and social scientists conduct research in communities, where cooperation of subjects and maintenance of long-term participation are often difficult to elicit. Such research is often most successful when engagement is reciprocal: participants suggest questions and approaches, and learn things from the results that are useful to their communities, rather than just being experimental subjects. (e.g., Jordan et al., 2004)

The same holds in teaching. "Learning through activities that contribute to meeting others' needs also helps students gain a greater awareness and a deeper sense of appreciation of how academic disciplines can contribute to solving real human problems. They not only learn the abstract theories on which those disciplines are based, but

they also realize how that theory can be applied to improve the human condition." (Ribeau, 2002)

### Civic engagement activities of national educational organizations

A move to a greater recognition of the importance and value of public scholarship will not occur without support from all parts of the scholarly system. As Boyer (1990, p. 78) wrote, "Moving in this direction requires the support and engagement of university presidents, faculty, faculty governance, professional associations, and accrediting bodies."

This challenge has been taken up by the CIC. The CIC Committee on Engagement was established in 2002 to provide strategic advice to the CIC Members (chief academic officers) on issues of public engagement. Its charge was to: 1) frame what is meant by engagement; 2) benchmark strategies for public engagement across the CIC; 3) identify performance measures; and 4) advise CIC Members' Committee on collaborative opportunities that could be included in the CIC strategic plan.

In spring 2003, the CIC Committee on Engagement and the Council on Extension, Continuing Education, and Public Service of NASULGC agreed to work together. Their joint goal was to generate benchmarks that all universities can use to assess institutional effectiveness in meeting commitments to engagement in the service of society.

Further, the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission (which accredits most CIC institutions) revised its "Criteria 5: Engagement and Service" accreditation standards by developing operational components and definitions of engagement, and by establishing engagement benchmarks.

### Benchmarks of civic engagement

The CIC-NASULGC Committee developed seven engagement benchmarks that will "allow universities to assess fulfillment of their engagement/public service missions, as well as serve as a basis for gathering economic development and technology information and building support for higher education among legislators, donors, and the public." These measures are also intended to "provide departments with criteria for including scholarly engagement activities for faculty and instructional academic staff as part of the tenure and promotion processes." The benchmarks ask for evidence of institutional commitment to engagement, institutional resource commitments to engagement, student involvement in engagement and outreach activities, faculty and staff engagement with external constituents, institutional engagement with their communities, assessing the impact and outcomes of engagement, and resource/revenue opportunities generated through engagement.

Further details about the definitions and ways to implement these benchmarks may be found on the CIC web site:

<http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/groups/CommitteeOnEngagement/index.shtml>

### What can graduate deans do?

If public scholarship and civic engagement are vital for universities and our contribution to society, then what can graduate deans do to foster them, while respecting resource constraints, faculty and departmental autonomy, and similar realities? Here are four ideas (adapted from Bloomfield, 2005).

First, encourage multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research and teaching. Significant social problems are rarely uni-disciplinary. Since the Graduate School is often at the center

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# Data Sources: New Findings on International Graduate Applications: Results from 2005 CGS International Graduate Admissions Survey I

by Heath Brown, Director of Research and Policy Analysis and Maria Doulis, Research Assistant

Last year, CGS initiated a three-part study of international graduate admissions trends. Because of the support of CGS members, we were able to produce highly reliable results documenting a decline in applications, admits and first-time enrollment by international students in U.S. graduate schools from 2003 to 2004. The major findings of last year's study indicated that graduate applications from international students had declined 28 percent, leading to a decline in international graduate admissions of 18 percent. Most importantly, first-time enrollment by international students was down 6 percent in fall 2004. Declines were most acute for students from the countries of China and India, the two largest sources of international students, and in engineering and the sciences, some of the disciplines that attract the largest numbers of international students.

We commenced the follow-up study of international graduate admissions in February with a survey on applications. Results from this survey indicate that international graduate applications are down for the second year in a row.

### Survey Design

The survey of approximately 450 CGS members was distributed by email on February 1st. We received responses from 155 institutions, including 80 percent of the institutions in the top 25 in terms of international enrollment and 72 percent of the institutions in the top 50. Such a response rate is truly remarkable. In the business of survey research, it is unheard of to collect such detailed information from so many survey respondents in such a short time. The consistency and reliability of this research is due to the time and efforts of graduate schools and their institutional research partners to assist in the data collection.

The survey asked graduate schools for estimates of applications by domestic and international students for the same time each year in 2004 and 2005. The survey asked for applications to be disaggregated based on country of origin and field of study for international graduate students.

### Findings

Our analysis reveals that international graduate applications for fall 2005 are down 5% from fall 2004 (See Table 1). While the number of domestic applications remained approximately the same as last year, nearly 60% of institutions reported declines in international applications, leading to the 5% decrease. This contrasts with the overwhelming 90% of respondents who reported declines last year. However, a second year of decline means that international

graduate applications did not rebound to the 2003 levels as many had hoped. Instead, graduate schools are contending with additional losses on top of the steep declines experienced during the 2003-2004 school year.

These losses are affecting institutions of all sizes. Overall, the average percent change was -5.6 percent, nearly identical to the aggregate

percent change. To test the variation in this application change, we divided the respondents into quartiles based on the number of international students. All four quartiles had approximately the same average decrease. This suggests that institutional size is not directly related to the severity or direction of the change. Most institutions, regardless of size, continue to deal with declines in international graduate applications.

As observed last year, the decline in applications was most pronounced for the two countries which have traditionally sent the largest numbers of students to U.S. graduate programs: China and India, down 13 percent and 9 percent, respectively. On the other hand, applications from the Middle East increased by 6 percent, and applications from Korea also posted a slight 1 percent increase. The increase in applications from the Middle East is consistent with last year's 4 percent increase in applications, and counters the concern that visa changes (i.e., the Visas Condor program which is aimed at applicants from many of the countries in the Middle East) would disproportionately discourage students from those countries from applying to U.S. institutions.

Also consistent with the findings documented last year were the two most popular fields for international students -- business (-8%) and engineering (-7%) -- which experienced the largest declines in applications. Other fields declined from 1 to 4 percent, with the exception of the humanities, which experienced a modest increase of 2 percent. Relatively few international students are enrolled in the humanities (13,093), particularly compared to enrollments in business (29,511) and engineering (49,380); therefore this increase was not sufficient to counter declines in other fields.

### Top 25 Institutions

Eighty percent of the institutions in the top 25 (in terms of international enrollment) responded to the survey. For these institutions,

international student applications declined 3 percent, slightly less than the overall finding. Also lower than the aggregate were declines in applications from China (-8%) and India (-7%), as well as in engineering (-4%). The engineering finding is important because 18 of the top 25 institutions in terms of international enrollment are also in the top 25 in terms of engineering enrollments. Last year, engineering applications dropped 36 percent among international students, eventually leading to a 7 percent decline in international first-time enrollment in engineering at the top 25 institutions.

The magnitude of the decline for these institutions is clearly not as large

as last year. Yet, even though these institutions were able to curtail this year's losses considerably, they did not experience an increase in applications that could overcome last year's declines. Even the few institutions in this group that reported minor increases in applications for 2005 still had double-digit decreases for last year.

Table 1: Trends in International Graduate Applications

	Application Change 2003-2004	Application Change 2004-2005
International	- 28%	- 5%
<b>Country of Origin</b>		
China	- 45%	-13%
India	- 28%	- 9%
Korea	- 14%	+ 1%
Middle East	+ 4%	+ 6%
<b>Field of Study</b>		
Business	- 24%	- 8%
Education	- 21%	- 3%
Engineering	- 36%	-7%
Humanities	- 17%	+ 2%
Life Sciences	- 24%	-1%
Physical Sciences	- 22%	-3%
Social Sciences	- 20%	-4%

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## Federal Relations Update

by Patricia H. McAllister, Director of Government Relations and Public Affairs

Reactions to the president's FY 2006 budget proposal have been swift and mostly critical on issues of concern to graduate schools. As noted in the March 2005 *Communicator* Federal Relations Update, investment in research across agencies is minimal and many policymakers and others continue to raise concerns about the long-term disinvestment in basic research and development that support the innovation that drives economic development and national security. The proposed cuts come at the same time that there is increasing awareness and support for the role of science and research in maintaining our global competitiveness.

This article reviews some of the reactions to the president's proposed budget and findings from recent reports concerning the need for the U.S. to increase its capacity for innovation. It also provides information on final IRS regulations on employment tax exceptions for student services that impact schools, colleges, universities and their employees.

### Concerns Mount as Impact of President's FY 2006 Budget Proposals Materialize

As the impact of the president's proposed budget has become clearer, mounting concerns about the long-term disinvestment in research and education have come to the fore. While a great deal of the debate will address the budget deficit and its impact on the long-term economic health of the nation, maintaining our competitive edge rests upon our leadership and pre-eminence in science, basic research and the ability to innovate.

Congressman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), Chair of the House Science Committee, transmitted the Committee's views and estimates on the FY 06 budget. The proposed budget for overall R&D funding in FY06 is \$132.3 billion, about a one percent increase over FY05. The proposed increases contain a 2 percent increase for development, with level funding for applied research and a 1.2 percent decline in basic research. The report notes:

"The Committee believes the proposed funding for basic research is insufficient. Funding short-term development at the expense of longer-term basic and applied research is not advisable, and neglects those portions of R&D where government support is most crucial. The Committee also believes that the budget must fully consider appropriate balances between defense and non-defense R&D spending and between biomedical and non-biomedical spending. At \$71 and \$29 billion, respectively, the R&D budgets of DOD and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) account for more than 75 percent of the total R&D budget. Further, the increase for defense development (\$1.4 billion) amounts to almost twice the overall increase in R&D (\$733 million). While fully acknowledging the important contributions of defense and biomedical R&D, the Committee urges that similar attention be given to other important R&D agencies, such as NSF, DOE, and NIST."

The Science Committee report expresses serious concern with the proposed cuts in NSF's Education and Human Resources Directorate, noting that NSF sponsors programs to improve K-12 and undergraduate education, and its fellowships and research assistantship programs support many graduate and post-doctoral students. Under the budget proposal, the overall investment in education at NSF would drop from \$841.4 million in FY 05 to \$737 million in FY 06, a 12 percent decrease. ([www.compete.org](http://www.compete.org))

There is bi-partisan concern about the proposed cuts in NSF funding with Senator Kit Bond (R-MO) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) both denouncing the small 2.4% increase in funding for the NSF.

Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) warned that basic scientific

research is an investment in America's future and that proposed cuts to the nation's basic science and technology programs will undermine our position as the world's high-tech leader and put at risk our rates of innovation, growth and prosperity. According to Senator Bingaman, "The best course is to increase government funding for basic research and spend more on graduate education in science and engineering."

### Reports Highlight Role of Innovation In Defining America's Success in the 21st Century

Several recent reports address the relationship of the capacity to innovate and leadership in science, engineering, mathematics and technology. Maintaining and strengthening our leadership in these critical fields is deemed as essential for the U.S. to retain its competitive edge in an increasingly global economy.

*Innovate America*, released by the Council on Competitiveness in December 2004, sounds a call to action to establish a national innovation initiative with recommendations in three broad areas of talent, investment and infrastructure. In the area of talent, recommendations include building a national innovation education strategy for a diverse, innovative and technically-trained workforce. Specific recommendations of interest to CGS and graduate schools include:

"Empowering young American innovators by creating 5,000 portable graduate fellowships funded by federal R&D agencies

Expanding university-based Professional Science Master's and traineeships to all state university systems and;

Reforming immigration to attract the best and brightest S&E students from around the world and provide work permits to foreign S&E graduates of U.S. institutions."

The report recommends increased investments in revitalizing frontier and multi-disciplinary research, energizing the entrepreneurial economy, and reinforcing risk-taking and long term investment. With regard to infrastructure, recommendations include creating a national consensus for innovation growth strategies, creating a 21st century intellectual property regime, and strengthening America's manufacturing capacity. To obtain a copy of the full report go to [www.compete.org](http://www.compete.org).

On February 16, 2005, The Task Force on the Future of American Innovation released a report titled *The Knowledge Economy: Is the United States Losing Its Competitive Edge?* The Task Force is a coalition of high-tech industry, scientific societies, and higher education associations founded in 2004 to advocate for greater investments for basic research in the physical sciences and engineering. This report concludes that while the U.S. still leads the world in research and discovery, our advantage is eroding rapidly as other countries commit significant resources to enhance their own innovative capabilities. The report establishes benchmarks in the areas of education, workforce, knowledge creation and ideas, R&D, and high-tech economies and examines U.S. performance in these areas with other regions and nations.

In the area of education benchmarks, the report notes that the U.S. has a smaller share of the worldwide total of science and engineering (S&E) doctoral degrees awarded annually than both Asia and Europe. And in 2000, about 89,000 of the approximately 114,000 doctoral degrees earned worldwide in S&E were earned outside of the U.S. To obtain a copy of the full report go to [www.futureofinnovation.org](http://www.futureofinnovation.org).

*Accountability for Better Results, A National Imperative for Higher Education*, was released by the National Commission on Accountability in Higher

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## Jennifer's Story: A Successful McNair Scholar and More

by Steven R. Burkett, Associate Dean & WSU McNair Program Director

Jennifer Hernandez, a McNair Scholar from New Mexico State University, recently completed her Ph.D. in Animal Sciences at Washington State University. Dr. Hernandez now holds a three-year post-doctoral appointment in the WSU School of Molecular Biosciences, working the area of molecular neuroendocrinology. This is not the same Jennifer Hernandez who once dreamed of becoming a veterinarian and stayed close to home through her master's degree at NMSU before entering WSU. She has now completed the change from working with animals and their owners, to an environment in which she is directly engaged in research that will impact both.

Though a different person in certain respects, Jennifer Hernandez is in other ways the same person who, as a McNair Scholar, began to understand and appreciate the nature and value of research and discovery. Certainly the McNair experience prepared Jennifer in significant ways for graduate study. However, it did not totally prepare her for the realities of life as a graduate student in a highly competitive program. Her story illustrates how McNair programs may aid the retention of some as they progress in their graduate studies. It also illustrates the benefits graduate schools may derive in their efforts to recruit and retain McNair Scholars from underrepresented groups.

Three significant events were instrumental in changing Jennifer's feelings about her goals: First, she worked briefly as a veterinary assistant and found that this was not what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Second, she was encouraged to participate in the NMSU McNair Program. The latter was perhaps the more significant of these two when, under the mentorship of Dr. Dennis Hallford in his endocrinology lab, she was introduced to the world of research and the prospect of a totally different career path than previously envisioned. The third "event" was gaining experience in and a growing appreciation for teaching as well as research in a university environment. Her work as a graduate teaching assistant resulted in a growing commitment to an academic career rather than conducting research in a more applied setting. With these events in mind, a key to her eventual success, and the role of the McNair program, was more serendipitous than planned.

The variety of opportunities and experiences opened to Jennifer through the McNair program solidified Jennifer's primary interest in research. However, more change was to come when she attended graduate school as a master's student at NMSU, and then as a Ph.D. student in Animal Science at WSU. Important to her story is that the McNair experience did not end with the completion of that program. Despite her accomplishments, Jennifer's move to WSU was far from easy. At NMSU she had been close to home with easy access to family and friends, including the McNair staff. If things were difficult, she had ready support from those close to her. When she arrived at WSU, she had access only to a phone and e-mail which, though useful, were poor substitutes for the immediate comforts of home.

As is often the case for many first-year graduate students, Jennifer had to deal with feelings of isolation and pressures to perform at what she perceived to be a higher level than she had previously encountered. The search for privacy contributed to her isolation. Graduate programs are, as we all know but seldom articulate, very public environments in which first-year students often feel uneasy about openly expressing their feelings, concerns, and even knowledge. This may include expressions of self-doubt or asking questions that suggest lack of preparation. This uneasiness frequently occurs among program peers who seem, on the surface, to be relaxed, confident and "superior." For Jennifer, the people and climate were new, the expecta-

tations different, and the norms for behavior and thought unclear. As one of few women and even fewer underrepresented students in her program, Jennifer's search for privacy was turned largely inward.

The McNair Program at WSU provided an outlet for Jennifer to gain support and a sense of privacy. She initially ignored or neglected early contacts with other students because they were outside her department. While initially ignoring some overtures, Jennifer did respond to a formal invitation to participate in a discussion group involving WSU McNair Scholars and other former McNair Scholars. For Jennifer this provided an opportunity to meet graduate students who had been at WSU for varying lengths of time, and the discovery that some were as desperate as she was for "someone to talk to" without concern for whether what they were saying or doing was "right or wrong." In this and subsequent encounters, her sense of isolation began to disappear. Participation in panels and social events provided a "life" outside her department. This, in turn, made coping with the expectations and demands inside the department much easier.

All students need an occasional place to "vent" their momentary frustrations. The ability "to just be myself" was for Jennifer, as it often is for most of us, therapeutic. Perhaps more importantly, this involvement permits expressions of satisfaction with oneself in ways that might be misinterpreted by departmental/program peers. Such relationships outside a program are often crucial for survival. For Jennifer, the opportunity to express herself and her concerns in a non-threatening environment was a godsend. It also prompted her to think about, and articulate in a positive way, the benefits of graduate study.

The latter occurred as Jennifer mentored current McNair Scholars as they prepared for the transition into graduate school. The mentoring process forced her to focus on the positive aspects of her graduate experience within the broader, less immediate, context of her long-term goals. During the past two years, Jennifer has given a number of talks, including serving as a keynote speaker for the WSU McNair Spring banquet -- an annual awards banquet for graduating scholars. Though she mentioned some of her early frustrations, her speech was a positive statement of encouragement for those in attendance. She focused on setting realistic goals, hard work, and accepting the hands that were inevitably there to assist her in meeting her changing personal goals.

The benefits that Jennifer has derived do not tell the entire story. Certainly she gained a social outlet which provided a modicum of necessary privacy. Certainly she developed and practiced her skills in public speaking which will serve her well in the future. Certainly these experiences contributed to her developing sense of purpose as a role model to aspiring undergraduates. However, both the McNair program and university have benefited in a number of ways as well. First, our undergraduate scholars and students have benefited from the positive attitude and persistence of an outstanding group of mentors and role models. Former McNair Scholars have been consistent in their eagerness to share past and current experiences, their excitement and passion for what they are doing, and their future career goals. Their insights and personal testimonies are an asset to those in the McNair program and to other students from underrepresented groups. Although some former McNair Scholars initially have been reluctant to participate given time constraints, all have responded to formal invitations to participate at least minimally by attending formal and informal events.

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of interdisciplinary arrangements, we can have a particularly important role to play by providing seed resources and small grants, noting communities of interest, facilitating partnerships among academic units, and helping to overcome bureaucratic barriers.

Second, provide the "top-down" to complement the "bottom-up." Successful civic engagement requires both ideas and commitment from faculty and students, and support from key administrators. We can articulate the recognition that civic engagement and public scholarship are crucial to the continued support and success of research universities, and we can help faculty and other administrators recognize ways in which public scholarship should be acknowledged in tenure, promotion, and salary decisions.

Third, use the access that our position provides to open doors for faculty to talk with community and business leaders, politicians, policy makers, and foundation executives. We can invite community leaders to campus, where they can participate in discussions of research problems and priorities and become stake-holders in university work. Our physical presence at meetings and conferences, to express support and engage in sharing of ideas, can provide important encouragement to faculty who are trying to develop programs.

Fourth, work with university public relations offices to get our stories out. Using our broad familiarity with research across our institutions, we can pass along information about research that exemplifies the personal aspects and civic consequences of academic work. Local public scholarship, with reciprocal engagement at its heart, is particularly suitable for such stories.

In these ways, we can give graduate education its proper role in achieving the more general purposes of the university as an engaged institution.

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### Summary and Implications

This is the second consecutive year of decline in graduate applications from international students. Last year, CGS research indicated that graduate deans were aware of the problem and were concentrating on implementing specific procedures to address inefficiencies in the admissions process. Yet, despite aggressive steps by graduate deans, and constructive measures by the federal government in addressing visa issues, further declines in applications suggest the seeds of a troubling trend. As capacity abroad continues to grow and regional integration accelerates, U.S. graduate schools may be entering a period of enhanced and sustained global competition for the very best international students.

Beyond the changes in the volume of international applications, very little is known at this point about the changing quality of the application pool. Last year, graduate schools indicated that quality

was roughly the same as in the past. It is too early to measure the quality of the fall 2005 application class, but the issue of quality has always been the overwhelming priority for graduate education and will continue to frame the discussion of these issues.

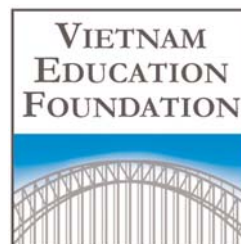
As we have already mentioned, last year the 28% decline in international applications resulted in an 18% decline in admits, and a 6% decline in first-time international enrollment. It is unclear at this early stage in this year's admissions cycle whether the same relationship between applications, admits, and enrollment will hold for this year. In order to monitor these developments, CGS will be conducting the second part of the survey program -- targeting international graduate admits -- in June 2005. We encourage you to fill out the survey, particularly if you have not participated in past surveys. Our ability to accurately evaluate the dimensions of these issues depends on the continued participation of our member deans.

## Jennifer's Story continued from page 5

Second, the McNair Program provides graduate schools with a large number of prospective students from underrepresented groups. Jennifer is just one of several McNair Scholars who have enrolled in graduate programs at WSU. To date, all who have come here are still enrolled or have successfully completed at least one degree. This is an impressive success rate unmatched by any other single group of students.

Third, several former Scholars have served as effective recruiters for WSU. Most, if not all, maintain strong ties to their undergraduate programs and serve as effective liaisons to attract new applicants. Thus, recruiting one McNair Scholar may aid in the recruitment of two, three or more in subsequent years. This is, then, a small short-term investment with potential for considerable long-term gains. Whether a university has a McNair program or not, these students will aid in the recruitment and retention of others who will, as intended, contribute to increasing the diversity of the professoriate.

Although not all McNair programs are directly linked to a graduate school, efforts to collaborate with these programs and the students they produce are open to all. In Jennifer, WSU found not only an outstanding graduate student, but more. We found a post-doctoral research associate, a potential faculty member, an effective graduate student recruiter, and an outstanding and effective inspirational mentor to undergraduate students preparing for graduate study.



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**Federal Relations Update** continued from page 4

Education on March 10, 2005. The report includes a series of recommendations designed to improve student preparation, public investment in educational priorities, teaching and research, cost-effectiveness, and the availability of key data. It echoes other reports in noting that we "must guard against complacency in research and service" and the key role played by colleges and university faculty in discovering new knowledge and applying it to practical problems. The report notes, "The supply of future talent is in question, especially in science and technology. Among U.S. degree holders in these fields, foreign-born individuals account for 17 percent of bachelor degrees, 29 percent of master's degrees and 38 percent of doctoral degrees. The migration of students to the U.S. for training in science and technology has been good for us and for the world, but we can no longer rely on imported brainpower. Other nations are competing vigorously for scientific talent in an increasingly mobile global economy." The full report is available at [www.sheeo.org/pubs/pubs\\_search.asp](http://www.sheeo.org/pubs/pubs_search.asp).

**IRS Releases Final Regulations on Student FICA Exception**

New regulations from the IRS provide guidance concerning the employment tax exceptions for student services. The regulations impact schools, colleges, universities (SCUs) and their employees and are applicable to services performed on or after April 1, 2005. The final regulations provide rules for determining whether an employee of a school, college or university is a student for purposes of sections 3121 (b) (10), 3121 (b) (2), and 3306(c) (10) (B) of the Code. According to the regulations, exceptions from employment for student services apply only if the employee is a student enrolled and regularly attending classes at an SCU. An employee whose services are

incident to and for the purpose of pursuing a course of study has the status of a student. In order to obtain the FICA exception, the educational aspect of the relationship between the employee and the employer, as compared to the service aspect, must be predominant. Students must be enrolled for an academic term and the definition of academic term has raised some concerns about how summers are treated for students who may not be enrolled in a course of study. With regard to graduate students, whether a graduate student is a student or a professional employee depends on all the facts and circumstances. It seems that as hours worked approaches 40 hours, it is more likely that the service aspect is predominate. CGS members should consult with their university counsel on these regulations which are available at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-reg/td\\_9167.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-reg/td_9167.pdf).

**Appropriations Committees Reorganize**

The Senate Appropriations Committee was recently reorganized and the Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs -- Housing and Urban Development -- Independent Agencies Subcommittee was eliminated. Jurisdiction over the National Science Foundation (NSF), the White House Office of Science and Technology (OSTP) and NASA were transferred to the new Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science, to be chaired by Richard Shelby of Alabama.

This reorganization follows a similar one in the House Appropriations Committee. However that Committee reduced its number of subcommittees by three from 13 to 10. The new House Subcommittee on Science, State, Just and Commerce, chaired by Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) will have jurisdiction over NSF, OSTP and NASA.

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