



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

APR 2 2010

**Open Letter to All Potential Applicants for Grants under the FY 2011 Ronald E. McNair
Postbaccalaureate Achievement (McNair) Program Competition**

Dear Colleague:

This letter is to inform you that the planned Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 competition for grants under the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement (McNair) Program has been delayed for a year until FY 2012.

As you may be aware, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) amended the Higher Education Act of 1965 to add several new provisions and requirements for the Federal TRIO Programs. Although the HEOA does not make major changes to the McNair Program, it does include a list of required services that each of the projects must offer and expands the list of permissible services that projects may provide. The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is currently in the process of soliciting public comments on the proposed regulations for the Federal TRIO Programs to reflect the statutory changes, which include changes to the objectives section of the selection criteria used by evaluators to score applications, new program definitions, and revised outcome criteria that will be used to measure program and project performance. Therefore, the Department has decided to delay issuing the notice inviting applications for new McNair grant awards from FY 2011 until FY 2012 in order to accommodate the time needed for the development and publication of final regulations. The Department believes it is equally important to give current grantees and new applicants time to understand the HEOA changes to the programs.

To accommodate the delay in the competitive process, the Secretary has invoked the authority contained in the HEOA to make a one-time extension to the current McNair grant award periods to synchronize the grant periods. That is, the grant end date for all currently-funded McNair projects with end dates in 2011 will be extended one year to 2012. Although this extension will not synchronize the grant periods for all currently-funded McNair projects, by delaying the competition just one year beyond the typical four-year cycle, potential new applicants will not find themselves in a position of having to wait another three to four years to submit applications. You can find updated information on the status of the new regulations and of the FY 2012 competition on our Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html> under "What's New".

Thank you for your continued interest in the Federal TRIO Programs. We look forward to working with you as we move forward with the McNair competition.

Sincerely,

/s/

Daniel T. Madzellan
Delegated the Authority to Perform
the Functions and Duties of the
Assistant Secretary for
Postsecondary Education

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