



Fall 10-24-2014

## McNair Scholar Studies Student Truck Drivers' Health to Improve Performance

Winthrop University

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### Recommended Citation

Winthrop University, "McNair Scholar Studies Student Truck Drivers' Health to Improve Performance" (2014). *Winthrop News 2014*. 203.

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# McNair Scholar Studies Student Truck Drivers' Health to Improve Performance

## Quick Facts

- Shalace Rose, a McNair Scholar and senior who won an award for her truck driver research, has interviewed nearly 30 student drivers at York Technical College in order to draw some general characteristics about truckers.
- Truck drivers' general lack of sleep came to the forefront this summer when a Walmart truck driver hit comedian Tracy Morgan's limousine. Morgan and three others were severely injured in the six-car pile-up on June 7, and one fellow passenger, comedian James McNair, was killed.



Shalace Rose

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA - A Winthrop University student's research may help give businesses and government regulators insight into beginner trucker drivers' sleep and dietary habits.

**Shalace Rose**, a **McNair Scholar** and senior who has won an award for her truck driver research, has interviewed nearly 30 student drivers at **York Technical College** in order to draw some general characteristics about truckers. She grew interested in the subject after talking with her best friend's father, who is a truck driver.

She expects to interview more student drivers during this academic year. The majority of the student truckers she surveyed are male, many of whom smoke, are overweight and typically average around six hours of sleep a night.

Truck drivers' general lack of sleep came to the forefront this summer when a **Walmart truck driver** hit **comedian Tracy Morgan's limousine**. Morgan and three others were severely injured in the six-car pile-up on June 7, and one fellow passenger, comedian James McNair, was killed.

**Rose**, an exercise science major from Camden, South Carolina, said she felt lucky that the **McNair Scholars program** gave her an opportunity to work with **faculty member Janet Wojcik** to research this timely topic. She wondered if truck drivers are entering the field already at risk for developing health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

Faculty at York Technical College have supported Rose in her efforts to collect survey responses.

"Their history of unhealthy diet intake and long hours working sedentarily result in excess accumulation of weight if the employee does not make a conscious effort to stay healthy," Rose wrote on her poster presentation. She observed that past research has focused on professional drivers, not students.

Rose has asked **Winthrop exercise science majors** to work with the York Technical College students to promote good health. She also suggests that schools that teach truck driving may want to add a workplace wellness component to their commercial vehicle training education curriculum.

Rose won accolades for her student truck driving research at the **McNair Scholars competition** this summer in Atlanta, Georgia. She wants to be a corporate wellness coordinator in order to encourage employees to take better care of themselves and to help employers cut health insurance costs.

The **Winthrop McNair Scholars Program** prepares first generation, low-income, and underrepresented undergraduates to be successful in Ph.D. programs by providing research and

other opportunities as well as financial support throughout the graduate admissions process. Winthrop's program includes, but is not limited to, a summer research experience, workshops, GRE and graduate school application preparation, and travel to present research and explore graduate programs.

Other examples of **McNair Scholars' research** this year have covered among other topics:

- \* a potential malignant melanoma growth suppressor
- \* cognitive flexibility as a predictor of depressive symptoms
- \* integrating principles of choreographic evaluation into education
- \* transfer pricing equity
- \* aggregation inhibitors for Alzheimer's amyloid-beta peptide

Winthrop's program is funded by a **five-year renewable TRiO grant** from the **U.S. Department of Education**, providing \$220,000 in federal funding is provided each year for programming and materials that will help 30 eligible students prepare for graduate study.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or e-mail her at [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

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