

# the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

APRIL 2018



Last month, UMB's own Jody Olsen, PhD, MSW — our 2018 **Commencement** speaker — was confirmed as the next Peace Corps director. The confirmation caps a lifetime of service to the Peace Corps, from Dr. Olsen's first day as a 22-year-old volunteer before 40 students in a Tunisian classroom to a succession of posts bringing her into the organization's highest reaches: country director, regional director, deputy director, acting director.

In her remarks before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in February, Dr. Olsen focused much of her testimony not on the Peace Corps' work overseas, but on how Peace Corps volunteers strengthen their home communities once they return from service abroad. "Returned Peace Corps volunteers bring home unique language, cultural, and diplomatic skills," she said. "They are true global citizens, contributing to our economy, our country, and the urban and rural communities where they live and work all across the United States."

This focus on bringing global competencies home where they can be applied to local problems — and, in fact, doing the reverse — came to define Dr. Olsen's leadership at UMB's Center for Global Education Initiatives (CGEI), which supports global education and research experiences for interprofessional teams of students. She and the center's new executive director, Virginia Rowthorn, JD, LL.M., noticed some years ago that researchers often quote a maxim popularized in global health circles — "global is local; local is global" — but that little scholarship existed on how community public health and global health can (or should) be linked.

So they stepped into this breach to document global/local methods, to develop best practices, and to articulate organizing principles that could help universities implement integrated global/local programs. These efforts were supported by community health experts Jane Lipscomb, PhD, RN, FAAN, who has since retired from the School of Nursing, and Lori Edwards, DrPH, RN, PHCNS-BC, assistant professor in the nursing school.

Of course, CGEI isn't only establishing the scholarly principles for global/local initiatives; it's also putting those principles to work. For instance, through the center's Brazil Exchange, UMB last year hosted Marcio Oliveira, MD, MSc, a provider in the State Specialized Center for Diagnosis, Treatment and Research (CEDAP) in STD and HIV/AIDS in Salvador, Brazil. While in Baltimore, Dr. Oliveira visited with faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and patients from the JACQUES Initiative — run by the School of Medicine's Institute of Human Virology — to share successes, challenges, innovations, and ideas for providing interprofessional services to people with HIV.

The visit was part of an ongoing collaboration between CEDAP and UMB, which was begun by Isabel Rambob, DDS, assistant professor in the School of Dentistry. Dr. Rambob has taken teams of UMB students to CEDAP over the last few years to learn about Brazil's leadership in mitigating the HIV epidemic. That leadership is attributable to state-sponsored clinics like Dr. Oliveira's (which are located across the country and offer free comprehensive health care to people living with HIV), along with highly effective prevention programs and universal access to free antiretroviral treatment. The UMB students traveling to Brazil study the country's model for addressing HIV infection and assess its translation to Baltimore's own community-based programs.

In fact, every CGEI grant-supported global project now requires a description of how students will link the work they would do overseas to the work they'll do back home in Baltimore.

In times like these, when there's a tendency toward isolationism, when America First policies are meant to keep the U.S. globally dominant, when we see budgets for global diplomacy and development slashed, we are wise to reject the notion of going it alone. We're wise to invest our attention and resources in scholarship and service that open our minds not only to the needs of the world but to the *solutions* that reside in every corner of it.

In her testimony before the Senate, Dr. Olsen said, "Time and again ... I see the remarkable ways that returned Peace Corps volunteers teach, inspire, and strengthen communities back home in the United States."

Every year, I meet with students who've spent their summer abroad on a CGEI grant. So I, too, see the ways in which global experiences affect students long after their projects have ended. Students tell me they've begun asking questions they might not have asked before, and challenging assumptions that had never met their scrutiny. They say that they're more likely to approach vulnerable communities in the U.S. with the same compassion they show overseas, and that they consider domestic health disparities not as inevitable, but as a result of the same deficiencies of policy and programming that they see around the world.

And that's how I know that UMB is cultivating the open, aware, and empathic leaders we need in this country — and in this world — more than ever before.

Sincerely,

**Jay A. Perman, MD**

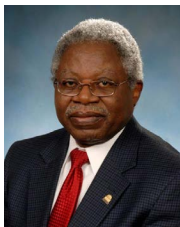
PRESIDENT

# LAURELS

APRIL 2018

## UNIVERSITYWIDE

Kudos to those in **Facilities and Plant Operations, Parking Services, Public Safety** and other departments who helped clear our streets and sidewalks during bad weather. This winter was mild compared to many, but when Mother Nature turned on the snow and ice — and especially the 60-mph winds on March 2 — our people met the challenge. Thanks!



VINCENT NJAR

**Vincent Njar, PhD**, professor, School of Medicine, Department of Pharmacology, and head, Medicinal Chemistry Section, Center for Biomolecular

Therapeutics, was awarded a five-year, \$2,242,090 R01 grant from the National Cancer Institute for “Development of Next Generation Galeterone Analogs for Prostate Cancer Therapy.” Co-investigators are **Nicholas Ambulos, PhD**, professor, School of Medicine, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, and director, Center for Innovative Biomedical Resources; **Yuji Zhang, PhD**, assistant professor, School of Medicine, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health; and **Maureen Kane, PhD**, associate professor, executive director, Mass Spectrometry Center, School of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

**Flavius R.W. Lilly, PhD, MA, MPH**, senior associate dean, Graduate School, associate vice president, Academic Affairs, **Jenny Owens, ScD, MS**, faculty executive director, Graduate Research Innovation District, **TaShara C. Bailey, PhD, MA**, diversity fellow

and PROMISE director, President’s Diversity Advisory Council, and **Amy B. Ramirez, MA**, director, Office of International Services, were among the co-authors on “The Influence of Racial Microaggressions and Social Rank on Depression Among Minority Graduate and Professional Students,” which appeared in *College Student Journal*. Lilly also was a co-author on “Stroke Survivors with Severe Mental Illness: Are They At-Risk for Increased Non-Psychiatric Hospitalizations?” which was published in *PLoS One*.

**Dr. Perman** and five other University of Maryland leaders — **Bruce Jarrell, MD, FACS**, executive vice president and provost, UMB, and dean, Graduate School; **Jane M. Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN**, dean, School of Nursing, and director of interprofessional education, UMB; **E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA**, executive vice president for medical affairs, UMB, and John Z. and Akiko K. Bowers Distinguished Professor and dean, School of Medicine; **Mohan Suntha, MD, MBA**, president and chief executive officer, University of Maryland Medical Center; and **Lisa**

**Rowen, DNSc, MS ’86, RN, CENP, FAAN**, chief nurse executive, University of Maryland Medical System — came together to officially open a new and improved Standardized Patient Program facility. The new facility is a collaboration of the schools of medicine and nursing that prepares students to provide the highest quality patient care and fosters interprofessional education. Through standardized patient encounters, learners gain essential experiences that are critical to preparing them for clinical practice and improving health care outcomes.

The School of Social Work’s Promise Heights B’more for Healthy Babies Upton and Druid Heights’ **Shasha Satchell**, certified lactation counselor/doula, and **Stacey Stephens, LCSW-C**, clinical instructor and program director, along with principal investigator **Wendy Lane, MD, MPH**, clinical associate professor, School of Medicine, presented “B’more for Healthy Babies: Improving Birth Outcomes in West Baltimore” at the annual meeting of the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs in Arlington, Va.



BRUCE JARRELL, JANE M. KIRSCHLING, E. ALBERT REECE, LISA ROWEN, DR. PERMAN, AND MOHAN SUNTHA CUT THE RIBBON FOR THE NEW STANDARDIZED PATIENT PROGRAM FACILITY HOUSED IN THE SCHOOL OF NURSING.

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# LAURELS

APRIL 2018

## SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

**Gary Hack, DDS**, clinical associate professor, Division of Prosthodontics, was selected to present two abstracts, “Devices to Screen for and Monitor Diabetes in Dental Practices,” and “Screening for Diabetes: The Maryland Experience,” at the American Dental Education Association’s Annual Meeting in Orlando, Fla.



**KUEI-LING  
“CHRISTINE” HSU**

**Kuei-Ling “Christine” Hsu, DDS, MS**, clinical assistant professor, Division of Pediatric Dentistry, received a \$30,000 grant from the Colgate Award for Research Excellence (CARE) Program

for her research proposal “Transcriptomic and Metabolomic Profiling of the Oral Microbiome in Socially Disadvantaged African-American Children with Early Childhood Caries.”

Resident **Surya Joseph** received a 2018 Research Aid Award of \$5,000 from the American Association of Orthodontics Foundation for her proposal “Use of Temporary Anchorage Devices for Ridge Preservation After Tooth Extraction.”

**Mary Anne Melo, DDS, MSc, PhD**, associate professor, Division of Operative Dentistry, in an international collaboration with Federal University of Ceara, Brazil, was the corresponding author for the article “Camellia Sinensis Active Compound and Derivates

Responding to Erosive Attacks on Dentin,” which was published in the journal *Brazilian Oral Research*.



**HANAЕ SAITO**

**Hanae Saito, DDS, MS, CRC**, clinical assistant professor, Division of Periodontics, and **Radi Masri, DDS, MS, PhD**, associate professor,

Division of Prosthodontics, received a \$15,000 grant from the Implant Dentistry Research and Education Foundation for their project “The Use of RNA-Seq in the Quantification of Gene Expression by Microbial Population in Adult Patient Diagnosed with Peri-Implantitis Compared to Controls.”



## PROMISE EVENT PROMOTES DIVERSITY

Twenty UMB students, faculty, and staff participated in the PROMISE AGEP (Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate) Research Symposium and Professional Development Conference on Feb. 16 at College Park. The PROMISE initiative aims to connect graduate students and postdoctoral scholars from under-represented ethnicities to professional development opportunities and pathways to careers in academia. Dominique Earland, a scholar in the University of Maryland School of Medicine’s STAR-PREP program, said attending the conference was a win-win, providing what she called “a wonderful learning experience outside of the lab and reinforcing the supportive, inclusive culture of UMB.” Read more about the event [here](#).

# LAURELS

APRIL 2018

## CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW



RICHARD BOLDT



LEIGH GOODMARK



AMANDA PUSTILNIK

Professors **Richard Boldt, JD, Leigh Goodmark, JD, and Amanda Pustilnik, JD,** held a roundtable discussion on “The Legal Grey Area Surrounding Consent” at the school.



DANIELLE CITRON

**Danielle Citron, JD,** Morton & Sophia Macht Professor of Law, discussed the online trolling of survivors and victims of the Parkland, Fla., shooting in

*The Washington Times.*

Student **Mena Gaballah** co-authored an op-ed published in *The Baltimore Sun* on the abuse potential of a popular over-the-counter drug.

**Larry Gibson, LLB,** professor, engaged in a discussion at Beth Am Synagogue with local attorney Ron Shapiro titled “Sages for the Ages” about race, politics, society, and their 50-year friendship.

**Eugene Mazo, JD, PhD,** visiting associate professor, presented “Foreign Interference with Elections” at a symposium at the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, Calif.



PAULA MONOPOLI

**Paula Monopoli, JD,** founding director, Women Leadership & Equality Program, was invested as the Sol & Carlyn Hubert Professor of Law at the school on Feb. 22.

**Frank Pasquale, MPhil, JD,** professor, wrote “The Real Barriers to Access to Justice,” which was part of the virtual symposium titled “The Futures of Legal Education.”

**Robert Percival, JD,** Robert F. Stanton Professor of Law and director, Environmental Law Program, wrote *Environmental Regulation: Law, Science & Policy*, which was published by Wolters Kluwer.

**Rena Steinzor, JD,** Edward M. Robertson Professor of Law, was profiled in the *Corporate Crime Reporter* on the topic of criminal prosecution in worker death cases.

## SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

**The following is a select list. For all the SOM laurels, visit [www.somnews.umaryland.edu](http://www.somnews.umaryland.edu).**

**Bridget Armstrong, PhD,** postdoctoral fellow, and **Maureen Black, PhD,** professor, Department



BRIDGET ARMSTRONG



MAUREEN BLACK



KATHLEEN NEUZIL

of Pediatrics, were co-authors on “Linking Biology to the Environment: Novel Methods for Understanding Pediatric Obesity,” which appeared in the *Journal*

*of Pediatric Psychology.* Black and **Kathleen Neuzil, MD, MPH, FIDSA,** professor and director, Center for Vaccine Development, were among the honorees as *The Daily Record* named Maryland’s Top 100 Women for 2018.

**Andrea Berry, MD,** assistant professor, Department of Pediatrics, and **Karen Kotloff, MD,** professor, Department of Pediatrics, and head, Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine, were among the co-authors of “Caregiver and Adolescent Factors Associated with Delayed Completion of the Three-Dose Human Papillomavirus Vaccination Series,” which was published in *Vaccine.* Kotloff also gave a seminar “The Epidemiology of Diarrheal Diseases in Low Income Countries” at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

# LAURELS

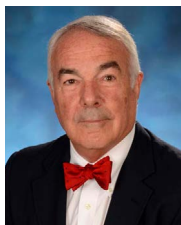
APRIL 2018

**Qi Cao, BM, PhD**, assistant professor, **Su Xu, PhD**, associate professor, and **Michael Morris, MD, PGY5**, all from the Department of Diagnostic



QI CAO

Radiology and Nuclear Medicine, were among the co-authors of “Decreased Taurine and Creatine in the Thalamus May Relate to Behavioral Impairments in Ethanol-Fed Mice: A Pilot Study of Proton Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy,” which was published in *Molecular Imaging*. Cao also was among the co-authors of “Prenatal Exposure to Diesel Exhaust PM2.5 Causes Offspring  $\beta$  Cell Dysfunction in Adulthood,” which was published in the *American Journal of Physiology-Endocrinology and Metabolism*.

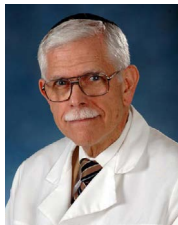


ALAN CROSS

a Chemically Modified Rough-Type Lipopolysaccharide Vaccine Candidate,” which was published in the *Journal of the American Society for Mass Spectrometry*.

**Alan Cross, MD**, professor, Department of Medicine, was among the co-authors of “Top Down Tandem Mass Spectrometric Analysis of

**Robert Edelman, MD, FACP**, clinical professor, Department of Medicine, and director, UMB Clinical Research Training and



ROBERT EDELMAN

Mentoring Program, conducted Department of Radiation Oncology Grand Rounds on Jan. 23 and Department of Medicine Cardiology Grand Rounds on Feb. 1. The one-hour presentations and discussions were both titled “Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator Conducting Clinical Research.”



JAMES KAPER

**James Kaper, PhD**, senior associate dean, academic affairs, and chair, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, and department colleagues **David Rasko, PhD**, professor, Institute for Genome Sciences, and **Anne-Marie Hansen, PhD**, assistant professor, were among the co-authors of “Phosphotyrosine-Mediated Regulation of Enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* Virulence,” which was published in *mBio*.

**Kirsten Lyke, MD**, associate professor, Department of Medicine, was among the co-authors of “Malaria Severity: Possible Influence of the

E670G PCSK9 Polymorphism: A Preliminary Case-Control Study in Malian Children,” which was published in *PLoS One*.

**Michelle Pearce, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, Center for Integrative Medicine, was lead author on “Spiritually Integrated Cognitive Processing



MICHELLE PEARCE

Therapy: A New Treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder That Targets Moral Injury,” published in *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*.

**Yan Wang, MD, DrPH**, assistant professor, **Erin Hager, PhD**, associate professor, and **Maureen Black, PhD**,



YAN WANG

professor, all from the Department of Pediatrics, were co-authors on “A Randomized Safety Promotion Intervention Trial Among

Low-Income Families with Toddlers,” which appeared in *Injury Prevention*.

# LAURELS

APRIL 2018

## SCHOOL OF NURSING

In partnership with WorkSource Montgomery and the Healthcare Initiative Foundation, the **University of Maryland School of Nursing at the Universities at Shady Grove (USG)** has been awarded a two-year, \$200,000 extension of the Rx for Employability grant from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation to fund the Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) grant. The award will supplement tuition support for more than 60 UMSON BSN students at USG and help combat the projected nursing shortage in Montgomery County, where USG is located.



NICOLE SMITH



MARY PAT ULICNY

**Nicole Smith, MS, RN, CNE, CHSE**, clinical instructor, Shady Grove, and **Mary Pat Ulicny, MHA, MS, RN, CNE**, clinical instructor and director, Clinical Simulation Lab, Shady Grove, spoke at the first annual Lippincott Nursing Education Innovation Summit in New Orleans. Their presentation was titled “Flipping the Clinical Simulation Lab Using a Simulated EHR.”

## SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



ANDREW COOP

**Andrew Coop, PhD**, professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and associate dean, academic affairs, received an 18-month, \$91,444 contract

from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for “Preclinical Identification of Better Antimuscarinic Antidepressants.”



BETHANY DIPAULA

**Bethany DiPaula, PharmD**, associate professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, received a seven-month,

\$135,816 contract from the Maryland Department of Health for “Opioid Prescription Review for Pain Management.”



PETER DOSHI

**Peter Doshi, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research, received a four-year, \$348,404 grant

from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation for “RIAT Support Center (Restoring Invisible and Abandoned Trials).”



JOGA GOBBURU

**Joga Gobburu, PhD**, professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, and director, Center for Translational Medicine, received a three-year, \$25,000 contract

from Upsher-Smith Laboratories for “NDA Strategy and M&S Support.”



STEPHEN HOAG

**Stephen Hoag, PhD**, professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received a one-year, \$58,252 contract from Maryland Industrial Partnerships for

“Formulation Development for Rare Disease Therapy.”



LAUREN HYNICKA

**Lauren Hynicka, PharmD**, associate professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, received a one-year, \$474,579 contract from the Maryland

Department of Health for “Hepatitis C Virus Review Program.”

**Joey Mattingly, PharmD**, assistant professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, received a one-year, \$10,000 grant from the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy for “Pharmapreneur: Defining the Role of Entrepreneurialism in Schools of Pharmacy.”

# LAURELS

APRIL 2018

**Mary Lynn McPherson, PharmD,** professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, has been selected to receive the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's Debra Sivesind Career Award, which she will be given in September at the university's 22nd Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Supportive Care, Hospice, and Palliative Medicine.



MARY LYNN MCPHERSON

Student **Dinci Pennap** was the recipient of the *JAMA Pediatrics* 2017 Trainee Paper of the Year award for her article "Patterns of Early Mental Health Diagnosis and Medication Treatment in a Medicaid-Insured Birth Cohort."



DINCI PENNAP

## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**Haksoon Ahn, PhD,** associate professor, and Dean **Richard P. Barth, PhD, MSW,** co-authored "Estimating Minimum Adequate Foster Care Costs for Children in the United States," which was published in *Children and Youth Services Review*.



SARAH DABABNAH

**Sarah Dababnah, PhD,** assistant professor, wrote a paper exploring the experiences of Palestinian autism service providers that was published in

*Global Social Welfare*.

**Jodi Jacobson Frey, PhD,** associate professor and chair, employee assistance program (EAP) sub-specialization, along with SSW



JODI JACOBSON FREY

alumnus **Lauren Bloom, MSW, MPP,** are co-authors on a new paper published in the *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health* that explores experiences of internal and hybrid EAP managers with regard to the ever-changing landscape of employer-sponsored programs such as EAPs.

**Corey Shdaimah, PhD,** associate professor, and alumnae **Elizabeth Palley, PhD, MSW, JD,** and **Amanda Miller, MSW,** co-authored a new article published in the *International Journal of Early Education and Child Care* that explores child care provider perspectives on how regulation and policy changes impact their ability to provide care.

## SAVE THE DATE

### PRESIDENT PERMAN'S FIFTH ANNUAL

# STATE *of the* UNIVERSITY ADDRESS

WEDNESDAY,  
MAY 9  
3 P.M.

Medical School Teaching  
Facility Leadership Hall  
*Reception to follow*



# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

APRIL 2018

## KAREEM HEADLINES FESTIVE DAY OF AWARDS

Lauren Kareem, MEd, isn't going back to her previous job as a middle school teacher anytime soon. That is good news to the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), which March 14 named Kareem its 2018 Employee of the Year.

Kareem is assistant director and curriculum coordinator for the UMB CURE Scholars Program, a pipeline program that is preparing 80 West Baltimore middle schoolers for health and research careers.



**LAUREN KAREEM PROUDLY ACCEPTS HER EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR GRAND PRIZE FROM HUMAN RESOURCES' MATT LASECKI AND DR. PERMAN.**

One of 12 UMB Employees of the Month eligible for the annual award, Kareem was honored at the UMB Employee Recognition Luncheon. The crowd of 190 cheered as she accepted the \$1,500 grand prize.

Matt Lasecki, SPHR, chief Human Resources officer and host of the luncheon, said, "Ms. Kareem is deeply committed to the excellence of the CURE Scholars Program, as is evident by her indefatigable energy and enthusiasm despite the very long hours she works. Often, as other employees are leaving work for the day, she is managing the innumerable details inherent in coordinating the day-to-day tutoring, experiments, field trips, and academic enrichment activities for three cohorts of students."

Kareem later said she is the lucky one. "Teachers here in Baltimore and across the country work incredibly hard and some are never rewarded for their efforts. I'm grateful that the UMB community places such a high value on the work that the CURE team does."

So you're not going back to the classroom? "That's a resounding no," she said with a smile, "and that's because of the latitude and the freedom and the support I have here. That's just incredibly rewarding.

"As a public school teacher, it was very difficult to get the supplies I needed for science and engineering activities. Now, the sky is the limit. I also have Robin's [CURE Scholars executive director Robin Saunders, EdD, MS] great example. She puts every last drop of blood, sweat, and tears into the program. She creates a culture within the CURE team of genuine passion and commitment. The opportunity I've been given is truly an honor." (*Read **more** about Kareem's work.*)

Employee of the Year was the highlight of an event where 87 UMB workers representing 2,275 years of service were honored. University President Jay A. Perman, MD, thanked the 20- to 45-year employees.

"Almost every day, someone comes up to me and says, 'Thank you — thank you for the work UMB is doing,'" he said. "That gratitude is conveyed to me as UMB's leader, but it's actually about you. This University's reputation — our good name and our good works — believe me, they say a lot more about all of you than they do about me."

The senior member of those being honored was Officer William Groh of the Public Safety team, who came to UMB in 1964. How long ago was that? The Beatles were on *The Ed Sullivan Show* that



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT, 53-YEAR EMPLOYEE WILLIAM GROH, JAMES T. HILL SCHOLARSHIP WINNER SARITHA JONES, COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD WINNER ROBERTTHA SIMPSON, AND 45-YEAR EMPLOYEES PERRY COMEGYS, DEBORAH PERRELLA, AND JANICE DIXON WITH DR. PERMAN.**



*Continued from previous page*

year. And the Cleveland Browns — *yes the Cleveland Browns!* — were NFL champions, before there even was a Super Bowl.

“I remember when this was a church, being used by the Presbyterians,” Groh said upon arriving at Westminster Hall, where the event was held. Asked what being saluted for his 53 years meant to him, he said, “It means a lot. It means that somebody cares as much as I care. I love this job. I love the University. It’s been very good to me and my late wife [who worked at the medical center].”

Also among the honorees were 45-year employees Perry Comegys, Deborah Perrella, and Rosalind Robinson of the School of Medicine, Janice Dixon of the Carey School of Law, and Maurie Gray of Administration and Finance.

What is it about the School of Medicine that makes employees want to stay?

Comegys credits his early supervisors, Bob Pendergrass and Seung Chang. “They just encouraged me to learn as much as I could,” he said. “We did different things in the lab. I started in Pathology, then I worked in the Histology lab, then the Microscopy lab.”

Comegys, who eventually graduated from Morgan State, started at UMB as a high school student who benefited from a city summer program at the time to keep kids in school. “I came as a youngster and I’ll leave here as an old man,” he said with a laugh.

Thomas Jemski, a 30-year honoree and part of the medical school’s photo/videography team with Mark Teske (33 years), said at the school “you get to meet people from every country, every nationality. It’s amazing to meet these people and get to know them. I really love that aspect of it.”

After lunch, Lasecki and Perman handed out awards.

Saritha Jones, an executive administrative assistant in the Carey School of Law, won the \$2,000 James T. Hill Scholarship, which was established to support the University’s commitment to staff development in recognition of the longtime vice president.

Lasecki quoted Jones’ supervisor, who said, “Despite the fast-paced nature of our office, Ms. Jones has always been willing to take opportunities to learn new skills, embrace training opportunities, and expand her responsibilities to adjust to the ever-changing needs of our office. As a result, she has been promoted twice in the last four years.”



**NEARLY 200 PEOPLE ENJOYED THE LUNCHEON AT WESTMINSTER HALL, WHERE 87 UMB EMPLOYEES REPRESENTING 2,275 YEARS OF SERVICE WERE HONORED.**

Jones earned a Human Resources Certificate in 2015 from University of Maryland University College. Now the award can help her pursue a bachelor’s degree in Human Resources Management.

Robertha Simpson, director of continuing medical education and conflict of interest at the medical school, won UMB’s Community Service Award.

Among her outreach efforts are serving as a UMB CURE mentor and serving food at Project Feast, a community event in West Baltimore that provides free Thanksgiving meals, clothing, and health resources to those in need.

Simpson is such a supporter of Project Feast, dating back at least 10 years, that she has recruited her daughter, Moriah, as a volunteer as she did members of the Baltimore City grand jury she was on in 2013. “I feel it’s very important to give back to the community,” she said in an understatement.

Simpson was surprised by the award. “I was elated when my name was announced, because what I do for the community and the UMB CURE Scholars is from my heart,” she said. “I did not expect to be recognized for these acts of kindness.”

But that’s what sets UMB apart, Employee of the Year Kareem said.

“I’m just grateful to work at a place that celebrates people,” she said.

On March 14 at the Employee Recognition Luncheon, UMB certainly did that.

— Chris Zang

# HELP ALONG THE WAY

APRIL 2018

## TURNING CHALLENGES INTO VICTORIES

BY CHRIS ZANG | PHOTOS BY DANA RAMPOLLA

The University of Maryland, Baltimore's program to hire individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities was winning Employer of the Year Awards in the early to mid-2000s from the Maryland Department of Disabilities, the *Baltimore Business Journal*, Maryland Works, and others.

But the program still wasn't where Vassie Hollamon, then facilities manager, wanted it. "We hadn't really done much to develop *our* skills as managers," recalls Hollamon, who had reached out to The Arc Baltimore for qualified candidates to fill jobs in the Housekeeping Department. "I was starting to look around for examples — things I could or should be doing."

The guidance Hollamon was seeking came in a parting gift from Joanna Falcone, who was leaving The Arc. It was a VHS tape she gave Hollamon of a program out of Cincinnati Children's Hospital called Project SEARCH.



THE DUO WHO LAUNCHED PROJECT SEARCH AT UMB, VASSIE HOLLAMON AND JOANNA FALCONE, WITH EARNEST WOODARD, THEIR FIRST HIRE.

"So I called them, hopped on a plane to Cincinnati, went to the Children's Hospital there and was just floored by what they had," Hollamon recalls. He came back to UMB and reported his findings of a yearlong program that mentors high school seniors with disabilities, teaching them job skills and often hiring them. Then he and several UMB colleagues returned to Cincinnati to take a second look.

***"Our version of the acronym KISS is 'keep it structured and systematic.' Do that and there's almost no limit to what can be done by our Project SEARCH graduates."***

***— Vassie Hollamon, associate director,  
Operations and Maintenance***

Afterward, an excited Hollamon met with Jerry Bullinger, then assistant executive director of employment at The Arc, telling him how UMB had to develop a partnership with The Arc, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the state Division of Rehabilitation Services to launch Project SEARCH. Hollamon recalls: "Jerry, one of the kindest gentlemen you will ever meet, said, 'That's great, what do you need from me?'"

"I told him: 'I need you to get Joanna Falcone back.'" Somehow, Bullinger granted his wish, even giving The Arc's Falcone an office on the UMB campus, and she and Hollamon have built Project SEARCH from a program with six interns in 2008 to 18 in 2018.

Though the interns do rotations in many areas at UMB and the University of Maryland Medical Center, Hollamon's Housekeeping Department has especially benefited from the program.

Anthony Wilkins, assistant director, says there are 21 housekeepers at UMB who have overcome intellectual and developmental challenges to become essential members of UMB's current facilities team.

The repetition inherent in housekeeping makes it a natural fit for those with cognitive disabilities, said Hollamon, who had experience employing them earlier at Columbia Mall.

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"I've described it as the instructions on the back of a shampoo bottle," he says. "Lather, rinse, repeat. We have many, many restrooms, but they all are generally cleaned the same way. We have lots of waste containers; they're generally emptied the same way. So while there are differences in schedules and buildings, the actual task that has to go on is routine, it's structured, and it's systematic. Our version of the acronym KISS is 'keep it structured and systematic.' Do that and there's almost no limit to



**HOWARD DISNEY WITH TWO PROJECT SEARCH INTERNS HE MENTORED AND THEN HIRED, FLOOR TECHS JAMAAL WHITE (LEFT) AND DEVONTE BEY.**

what can be done by our Project SEARCH graduates."

Devonte Bey is living proof of Hollamon's high ceiling. Representing the Class of 2017 at Project SEARCH's graduation last June, Bey said, "Let us be the best we can be so that we can make our lives and the lives of those closest to us be filled with happiness and pride."

It was hard to believe the poised speaker had once been given little hope of walking or talking. As his mother, Kadijah Bey Bryan, told the 80-plus assembled, "Just because the doctors placed a label over our children's heads does not mean that they cannot do."

Now, she said, Devonte rides the bus by himself. Best of all, "he went out there and got a job!" said Bey Bryan, eliciting applause.

Before the graduation ceremony, she made a point of approaching Howard Disney in her wheelchair and saying, "Thanks for giving my son a chance."

Disney, assistant director of Housekeeping, School of Dentistry, said it was he who should be thanking her. He recalled being impressed by Bey immediately. "He's a guy where if I give him an assignment, I can say, 'Devonte, this is what I need you to take care of' and the minute he's done he's on the radio saying, 'OK, Mr. Howard, that's done. What do you need me to do next?'"

So in March 2017, three months before Bey's graduation, Disney told Project SEARCH job coach Tiera Parker, "Get me his application. We're going to get this young man hired."

Today, Bey, 22, is a full-time employee at the School of Dentistry who enjoys his job "very much." As a Project SEARCH intern, he pulled trash, swept floors, cleaned walls, and disposed of bio bags. "Now I'm scrubbing and burnishing floors," he says.

Asked how he's doing as a floor tech, Bey says, "I think I'm improving."

He credits Disney, whom he says "is really more of a mentor than a boss."

Bey likes the fast pace at the dental school. The most satisfying part of the job? "Knowing that I was helpful for one of the patients," he says, giving directions or opening a door for someone with a walker. "When they say thank you, I take a lot of pride in that."

And he quickly admits he wouldn't have a job at UMB without Project SEARCH. "No, because before the internship I had never even heard of this place."

#### **GO GET IT**

Several blocks away, another Howard Disney success story is working in the Housekeeping Department at the SMC Campus Center. Jamaal White, Bey's cousin, likes to "do everything" with the floors. "First you clean the floor, then you take the wraps off, then you put the wax on it and let it sit before you can burnish it," says White, 23, who signed up for Project SEARCH while he and Bey were at Edmondson-Westside High School. "Different floors need different things. Some take one coating, some two. I learned to do freestyle where you can hold the machine with one hand, turn your back and spin around."

He is creative away from the Campus Center floors as well. Recent part-time jobs include home improvement and party decoration, not to mention his real passion: designing custom athletic shoes.

How many pairs? "About a thousand, my closet is full of them," says White, who strips down the shoes, paints them, and

*Continued from previous page*

applies new designs for resale. “That’s why I’m going back to college to take designing.”

Supervisor Marlene Johnson calls White “my project person” for the gusto he shows in tackling special projects. She shows a visitor a sparkling freight elevator. “This was really a mess before Jamaal cleaned it up,” Johnson says. “Now he maintains it. He listens, he pays attention, he’s easy to train, which is good because I told him if he’s interested in management, training is one part of it.”

Told that Disney liked his “go get it” attitude as a Project SEARCH intern, White smiles and says, “I see someone say you’re not going to do it. I tell myself to go get it done and make success happen.”

Proud to have his own place to live, White wakes up each day next to a motivational poster. “It tells me you gotta get up, man, you have to go to work. Go get it, go get it. That’s why I’m here [at the University].”

That pride and dedication is what makes the Project SEARCH graduates such good employees, says Hollamon. “What I have found with people with disabilities, be they physical or cognitive, is they want to be treated with dignity and respect and they want to contribute. They just have to find the right place. At UMB, we have found the right place for many Project SEARCH graduates, especially in Housekeeping.”

#### **FIRST ARRIVAL**

Talk of commitment takes Hollamon back to his first Arc Baltimore hire, Earnest Woodard. A UMB employee since 2002, Woodard today is based in the Institute of Human Virology, where he collects trash, cleans windows, and puts away supplies. He remembers his first day. “I worked on night shift in the Bressler Building.” Stints in other buildings followed. “I’ve worked in all the buildings,” says Woodard, an engaging man who likes to talk — maybe a bit too much, Hollamon jokes.

But his supervisor, Shaquel Williams, has nothing but praise. “Earnest is very helpful, respectful, and friendly,” she says. “He likes to assist his co-workers and the clients throughout the IHV building. He also has perfect attendance.”

Asked why he has such good attendance, Woodard turns serious. “If I want to get the job done, I have to come in. I can’t tell Shaquel this isn’t getting done til next week.”

He credits The Arc and Joanna Falcone for his job, for the condo he bought, and for his happy marriage.



**A FREIGHT ELEVATOR IN THE SMC CAMPUS CENTER THAT “WAS REALLY A MESS,” IN SUPERVISOR MARLENE JOHNSON’S WORDS, TODAY IS SPARKLING AFTER MUCH WORK BY JAMAAL WHITE, WHO NOW MAINTAINS IT ON A REGULAR BASIS.**

“Without The Arc I wouldn’t be here,” says Woodard, 59, who gives back as president of The Arc’s Helping Hands board of directors. “I would be in some sort of trouble. Now? I have to behave — pay the bills. It’s good, real good.”

All seem to agree Hollamon’s vision has been a win-win for the University and the workers.

“I enjoy being able to depend on the Housekeeping Department to provide real-life job experiences for our interns,” says Tameka Harry, Project SEARCH program manager. “The mentors are awesome! We provide them with an intern who is determined to work and the department places them. When we have that perfect match, they hire our guys. That’s so exciting!!”

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Adds Disney: “I believe Project SEARCH is a huge asset. It’s great to see people from the program learn new and useful things that can help them in life. Jamaal and Devonte are prime examples of young men willing to learn anything they can to better themselves. I hope I have had an impact on them, because they sure did have an impact on me.”

Falcone, senior director of competitive employment at The Arc, also has glowing words for the program — and Hollamon.

“Project SEARCH has been successful on this campus because so many people have been willing to give our interns the opportunity to learn and grow,” she says. “I believe Vassie is truly visionary in that he realized many years ago the value of including people with disabilities in the workplace and the positive

contributions they can make — and then he worked to make it happen here. Because of his actions, and the support of the rest of the Facilities Management team, many Project SEARCH interns can now proudly say they’re UMB employees — and that’s huge.”

Hollamon cites Falcone and the Cincinnati videotape with being the key.

“No one person could make this program what it is today. It really has been a set of happy circumstances,” he says. “But frankly, if I could point to any one person who has made it successful, it would be my partner and friend Joanna Falcone. Plus the many managers and supervisors who have contributed. It’s been a team effort — one I am enormously proud of.”



EARNEST WOODARD TAKES SO MUCH PRIDE IN HELPING KEEP THE INSTITUTE OF HUMAN VIROLOGY CLEAN THAT HE HAS A PERFECT ATTENDANCE RECORD.

# THE UMBRELLA GROUP

*UMB Roundtable on Empowerment in Leadership  
and Leveraging Aspirations*

APRIL 2018

## BRUTALITY OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING EXPOSED

A young woman was trafficked into the United States from Mexico, tricked into crossing the border under the cover of night. The lure? The quintessential promise of the American dream — a job, a better life, the ability to support her young child.

The job that awaited her? Forced prostitution. The woman was thrust into a life of fear, trauma, and cruelty. She was trafficked up and down the East Coast, from New York to the Carolinas. Eventually, she escaped her human traffickers and found her way to help at the University of Maryland Support, Advocacy, Freedom and Empowerment (SAFE) Center for Human Trafficking Survivors.

The harrowing tale was told by Ambassador Susan G. Esserman, JD, founder and executive director of the SAFE Center, during a luncheon presentation titled “Raising the Curtain on Human Trafficking in the United States” at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) on Feb. 27.

“Sadly, this is not a rare occurrence in the United States,” Esserman said to UMB employees, students, and guests at the Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry. “Exploitation like this takes place around us, in communities across the United States.”

The luncheon, hosted by the UMB Roundtable on Empowerment in Leadership and Leveraging Aspirations, also known as the UMBrella Group, began with remarks by UMBrella Group chair Jennifer B. Litchman, MA, senior vice president for external relations and special assistant to the president.

“Human trafficking is one of the greatest human rights violations of our time,” Litchman said. “I’m proud that the University of Maryland, Baltimore has undertaken the challenge of human trafficking on such an important and profound level and I’m glad you’re all here to learn more about it and hopefully find ways that we can all work together to stop it.”

In May 2016, UMB and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) announced the opening of the SAFE Center near

College Park. The SAFE Center is an interdisciplinary service, research, and advocacy initiative of UMCP and UMB through their formal collaborative program for innovation, the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: *MPowering the State*.

“It’s an absolute lifeline to survivors here in Maryland, where, sad to say, human trafficking is a profitable and desperately brutal trade,” said UMB President Jay A. Perman, MD.

In introducing Esserman to the more than 100 attendees, Perman praised her efforts in combating human trafficking.



**SUSAN ESSERMAN: THERE ARE 25 MILLION HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.**

“I cannot imagine anyone more passionate about ending human trafficking, more knowledgeable about how to do it, or more persuasive in getting advocates to sign on to a collective vision and to invest the resources we need to bring help and hope to survivors,” he said.

Esserman is a visiting professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She served in four senior positions in the Clinton administration, including deputy U.S. trade representative with the rank of ambassador.

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OVER 100 CAME TO THE DR. SAMUEL D. HARRIS NATIONAL MUSEUM OF DENTISTRY TO HEAR WHAT THE SAFE CENTER IS DOING TO HELP SURVIVORS.

The number of human trafficking victims in the U.S. is hard to quantify because it is a crime hidden from view, Esserman said. The International Labor Organization estimates 25 million people are trapped in human trafficking. The 2016 Global Slavery Index reports human trafficking occurs in more than 165 countries.

“Twenty-five million is a staggering number,” she continued. “Human trafficking takes place on this scale because it’s an immensely profitable criminal enterprise.”

According to the Department of Justice, human traffickers earn roughly \$150 billion a year in illegal profits, Esserman said. In the U.S., the State Department reports between 14,500 and 17,500 new victims are trafficked into the country each year, with hundreds of thousands overall, she said.

The Baltimore-D.C. metro area has a particularly high rate of human trafficking because of its location along the Interstate 95 corridor and its access to airports and other transportation hubs, Esserman said.

Since the SAFE Center opened, more than 50 survivors of sex and labor trafficking have been served.

“I have to say, we were shocked by this number,” Esserman said, noting she expected a much smaller number of victims

because they are often fearful to come forward. “We were quite overwhelmed by the need that we saw.”

The center’s clients are adults and minors, U.S. citizens and foreign nationals, women and men. The center provides bilingual legal services, social services, mental health and medical care, job search assistance, and English as a Second Language programming.

“The SAFE Center is an initiative of *MPower*, a strategic partnership between the University of Maryland, Baltimore and the University of Maryland, College Park. *MPower* is truly the ideal platform for our center because it has enabled us to draw widely on the expertise, the clinical experience, and research of multiple schools and programs from within both universities,” Esserman said, adding the center has collaborated with several schools from both universities, including the schools of social work, law, and nursing at UMB.

The center also has hosted 40 student interns and graduate assistants since it began operations, including undergraduate, master’s, and PhD students.

“We have been energized [by] these students, and, at the same time, we’re very proud to be training a new generation of anti-trafficking professionals,” said Esserman, who also praised SAFE Center deputy director Laura Ardito, JD.

While progress in combating human trafficking is underway, there still is much work to be done, Esserman said.

“A century and a half ago, shortly before this country abolished slavery by approving the 13th Amendment, Frederick Douglass warned that our battle against this sort of injustice would not end with ratification of the amendment. ‘Slavery has been fruitful in giving itself names,’ he said. ‘And it will call itself by yet another name, and you and I and all of us had better wait and see what form this old monster will assume, in what new skin this old snake will come forth.’ Today, tens of thousands of human trafficking victims live in fear and despair in this great nation. The monster wears a different skin, but make no mistake, this is slavery. And together it is our work to end it,” Esserman said.

— Mary Phelan

See the event video [here](#).

# LIVENEARYOURWORK

APRIL 2018

## SOM'S LAWSON IS FIRST TO BUY HOUSE IN IMPROVED PROGRAM

Living in an apartment in Charles Village, near the Johns Hopkins University campus where she went to college, Shea Lawson had to take four buses and sometimes more than an hour to get to and from her job as a research project coordinator at the Brain and Tissue Bank at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

She wasn't crazy about the commute or, as she put it, "putting money down the rent drain." Last fall, she was thinking about buying a house but wasn't sure she could swing it financially, so she started thinking about shopping for a condo instead.

But when an email touting the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) improved Live Near Your Work (LNYW) Program landed in her inbox in early November, her outlook on buying a house brightened. She sprang into action, eager to take advantage of the grant that provides University employees up to \$18,500 toward the purchase of a home in seven targeted Southwest Baltimore neighborhoods — Barre Circle, Franklin Square, Hollins Market, Mount Clare, Pigtown/Washington Village, Poppleton, and Union Square.

"I jumped on it pretty quick," Lawson said of the program, which officially launched Jan. 9. "When I saw the advertisement [in November], I went on the Zillow real estate website, looking at houses in these neighborhoods. I was mostly looking at Pigtown, Barre Circle, and Hollins Market, because I was more familiar with those areas."

### TAKING OWNERSHIP

She soon contacted a realtor and toured about 10 houses between late November and mid-January, all while working with a mortgage company to set up the financing for a potential purchase. She completed the program's required homebuying counseling sessions with UMB's LNYW partner, GO Northwest Housing Resource Center, attended the employee kickoff event at the SMC Campus Center on Jan. 11, and was among the first to apply when applications opened Jan. 29.

Today, Lawson is the proud owner of a rowhouse in Pigtown, the first grant recipient in the improved LNYW Program, which offers \$16,000 from UMB and \$2,500 from the city of Baltimore, a dramatic increase from the program's former

\$5,000 incentive. The University has committed \$1.5 million to the initiative, with hopes that 90-plus employees will take advantage of this financial benefit. Lawson says the program was a perfect fit, opening the door to homeownership and fulfilling her desire to stay at UMB long term.

"I really didn't have enough for a down payment on a house. I would've had to canvass some relatives for a loan," said Lawson, who has been working at UMB since May 2017. "This allows me to be financially independent. And being near my work was appealing, especially after I decided I wanted to stay at UMB for a while. If it weren't for this program, I probably would've ended up in another rental situation."

"I actually had been trying to get my financials in order to possibly



SHEA LAWSON PROUDLY POSES IN THE KITCHEN OF HER NEW ROWHOUSE, WHICH UMB HELPED HER PURCHASE.



*Continued from previous page*

look at condos. I thought that might be the next step for me. A house seemed like a much bigger investment than I initially thought I was ready for. But seeing the Live Near Your Work Program advertised and looking into that, it all of a sudden became feasible.”

Emily Kordish, Human Resource Services benefits manager and the LNYW coordinator, said of Lawson: “Shea was extremely pro-active and resourceful. She really utilized our resources and website and got everything together on her own to get this done. It was a very seamless and positive process working with her.”

### HOME SWEET HOME

Lawson, a city native who went to high school at the Baltimore School for the Arts before earning a bachelor’s degree in history at Johns Hopkins, is thrilled with her purchase, a rowhouse that was built in 1900 and had been refurbished in the past year.

“I didn’t have a specific type of house in mind when I started looking,” she said. “I just looked at everything in my price range and any place that had decent parking options. The house I found has a spacious, open floor plan that still manages to feel cozy and inviting, with solid workmanship on all of the interior features. All of the inside was redone. Half of the basement is finished. And they put a parking pad in the back.”

As for the neighborhood, Lawson says she liked “the close-knit and friendly vibe of the street and block,” and adds that her proximity to M&T Bank Stadium and other downtown attractions was a plus.

“I can see the stadium lit up at night from my back bedroom window, which is a fantastic view for a lifelong Ravens fan like me,” she said. “It will be convenient to my new digs in Pigtown without being overwhelmingly intrusive. It’ll be the best of both worlds!”

Lawson was extremely pro-active in pursuing the grant, but she also praised Kordish and the program’s partner organizations for helping make her homebuying experience a success.

“It’s been very smooth. The program is run very well,” Lawson said. “Everyone I’ve encountered who’s a part of it — Emily Kordish, Live Baltimore, GO Northwest — they’re very much enthusiastic about it and want to get you the information you need. Also, the Live Near Your Work website has a lot of good information and is really well done.



**SHEA LAWSON LIKES “THE CLOSE-KNIT AND FRIENDLY VIBE” SHE HAS FOUND IN HER PIGTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR M&T BANK STADIUM. “I CAN SEE THE STADIUM LIT UP AT NIGHT!” RAVES LAWSON, A BIG RAVENS FAN.**

“I got a lot of help from a lot of good people in the program and from my realtor and my lender — everyone made it easy for me to communicate with them. Those in the Live Near Your Work Program are passionate about this, they want it to work. It’s not just the money UMB has put up, it’s that they’re engaged.”

— Lou Cortina

APRIL 2018

For years, CURE Corner has been telling UMB readers about the activities of the scholars, West Baltimore middle school students who are being prepared for health and research careers through hands-on workshops, lab experiences, and mentorship. This month, we are giving you a more personal look at some of the CURE scholars and the UMB mentors whose guidance lies at the heart of the program. | [Learn more about the CURE scholars here.](#)



**SCHOLAR:**  
**JAYLEN GALMORE**  
sixth-grader, Green Street Academy

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT BEING A CURE SCHOLAR?**

Getting to explore new things and learning, like with the cow eye dissection. From that activity I learned the eyeball has a lot of muscle and fat with liquid on the inside.

**WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?**

I want to be a surgeon, like Dr. Rodney Taylor [associate professor, Otorhinolaryngology], who spoke at our Curriculum Selection Day. I used to want to play basketball in the NBA.

**WHAT CURRICULUM TRACK AND RESEARCH TOPIC DID YOU SELECT AND WHY?**

I chose anatomy as my curriculum track and prostate cancer as my research topic. I want to learn about why black men get prostate cancer more than other people.



**SCHOLAR:**  
**LYNIJAH RUSSELL**  
sixth-grader, Franklin Square Elementary/Middle School

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT BEING A CURE SCHOLAR?**

The hands-on activities in MESA [mathematics engineering science achievement] are better than I ever imagined! I also like IXL [a math tutorial] on Saturdays.

**WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?**

I want to work part time as a doctor and part time as a lawyer.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE UMB CURE ACTIVITY SO FAR?**

I enjoyed the speaker series with Dr. Craig Bennett [assistant professor, Orthopaedics] and building bridges in MESA.

**WHAT RESEARCH TOPIC DID YOU SELECT AND WHY?**

I chose to research video game therapy for stroke patients. One of my family members had a stroke and I would like to help others.



**MENTOR:**  
**DANIELLE DAY**  
student, School of Medicine

**WHY DID YOU JOIN THE UMB CURE SCHOLARS PROGRAM?**

I believe every child deserves to have the experiences I was privileged enough to have had as a child. I simply want to pay it forward.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT THE UMB CURE SCHOLARS PROGRAM?**

When we check in with the scholars before beginning activities. Their perspectives on current events, and the experiences they've had, continuously inspire and humble me.

**HOW WILL MENTORING BETTER PREPARE YOU AS A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER?**

I plan on pursuing a specialty in pediatrics, so the scholars keep me up to date on what's relevant to them at their age. I also grew up in a different community and state, so CURE provides a different perspective.

# PUBLIC SAFETY

APRIL 2018



## DRIVERS: PARK THE DISTRACTIONS

When we think of distracted driving, cellphones immediately come to mind. And yes, they are a big culprit, as we'll discuss later.

But a pack of french fries or a breakfast bar on your lap, adjusting the radio, applying makeup, taking a drink, brushing your hair, punching in an address on the GPS, talking to passengers, or just daydreaming on a pretty day also can be offenders stopping you from reaching your destination safely.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, distracted driving claimed 3,477 lives in 2015 alone.



Even scarier is that drivers appear to be getting even bolder in what they do behind the wheel. Drivers changing their clothes, flossing their teeth, and shaving their legs have been cited in some accident reports.

Texting and talking on cellphones, of course, tops the list. Experts say because text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the greatest distraction.

The average time your eyes are off the road while texting is approximately five seconds. When traveling at 55 mph, that is enough time to cover the length of a football field — blindfolded!

The Federal Communications Commission Consumer Guide urges you to consider the following:

**Give clear instructions** — Give new drivers simple, clear instructions not to use their wireless devices while driving. Before new drivers get their licenses, discuss the fact that taking their eyes off the road — even for a few seconds — could cause someone injury or even death.

**Lead by example** — Be a role model for others by not being a distracted driver. If you need to text or talk on the phone, adjust the radio, etc. — pull over to a safe place. Set rules for yourself and your household regarding distracted driving.

**Become informed and be active** — Tell family, friends, and organizations to which you belong about the importance of driving without distractions. Take information to your kids' schools and ask that it be shared with students and parents.

“With the volume of traffic and pedestrians we have around the University, driving is difficult enough with two hands on the wheel and your full attention on the road,” says Cpl. J.R. Jones, safety awareness officer in the UMB Department of Public Safety. “If you add any distraction — especially texting — you’re just asking for trouble. So please keep your eyes on the road.”

— Chris Zang and Dana Rampolla