

UMB & the Community

A UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND PUBLICATION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

WELCOME



Brian Sturdivant
UMB Director of Community Affairs

WELCOME TO THE SECOND ISSUE of *UMB @ the Community*, a biannual digest from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) highlighting its engagement with and service to local communities. We at UMB are proud of our involvement with local leaders, community groups, and schools to play a role in addressing some of the most pressing needs in Baltimore.

In this issue you'll read about the newly formed UMB Outreach Council. The council enables us to bolster our engagement with neighborhoods through Baltimore's Community School Initiative. We have initially partnered with George Washington Elementary School, Diggs-Johnson Middle School, and the Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy.

During its first months of operation, the Outreach Council has been instrumental in providing dental screenings at George Washington, volunteers to prepare the school building for the 2008-09 school year at Diggs-Johnson, paid summer research internships for Vivien Thomas students, and career development exercises for students at all three schools.

The council also has directed pre-existing programs to students in our partner schools and their families such as A Bridge to Academic Excellence, a tutoring program run by pharmacy students; mental health resources from the Social Work Community Outreach Service; and the School of Medicine's Youth Science Engagement Program.

In future issues of *UMB @ the Community*, I will keep readers abreast of our continued commitment to our neighbors.



The University of Maryland BioPark has had lots to celebrate recently. Building Two, with its six floors and 238,000 square feet of space (nearly double that of the first building), is now complete and tenants are moving in.

The establishment of the BCCC Life Sciences Institute, a partnership between the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) to provide career and technology education programs to high school students is planned. The partnership would enable students, including those from nearby Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy, to take two years of classes at BCCC before two years of baccalaureate education at the University of Maryland School of Medicine's medical and research technology program.

A Goodwill Boutique retail outlet, on the street level of the 638-space BioPark garage, will open in early 2009.

Construction is under way on Building Three, a 180,000-square-foot lab and office center at the corner of West Baltimore and South Poppleton streets. The building will be completed next year.

Construction has begun on a fourth building that, when finished in 2010, will house the Maryland Forensic Medical Center.

A ceremonial groundbreaking for the state's new Forensic Medical Center was held in October. Officials said the construction of the facility will bring to Maryland a more sophisticated crime fighting tool, new training facilities, and more advanced ability to identify troublesome public health trends.

In just the four years since it was established, the BioPark already employs nearly 450 people and has generated more than \$135 million in capital investments.

The Maryland medical examiner conducts over 10,000 death investigations and 4,000 autopsies a year, gathering information that is critical to our public health efforts.

The structure, scheduled for completion in spring 2010, will be the nation's second largest stand-alone medical examiner facility. The latest forensic technology will be available including a CT scanner for virtual autopsies.

The BioPark project is helping to boost the city's and the state's profile in the biotech industry and creating education and employment opportunities for residents of Poppleton, the West Baltimore neighborhood next to the BioPark.

Above: University, government, business, and community leaders unite for the groundbreaking of BioPark Building Two.

High School Students Get Early Start on Science Careers

University of Maryland Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy Summer Research Program

Bailee Jones thinks her internship in HIV/AIDS research at the School of Medicine during the summer was just the right transition to her freshman year at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Fla., this fall, where she studies nursing.

The University sponsored a paid summer research program for Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy students to help them consider careers in health care and helping professions.

Jones, 18, is highly motivated to pursue nursing. She is following her mother, grandmother, and eight aunts into the field. "It's something I feel passionate about and something I feel comfortable with," says Jones, who graduated in the spring from Vivien Thomas, which is near the University of Maryland BioPark in West Baltimore.

Other interns at the School of Medicine this past summer, joined the research program to gain experience to help them enter health professions or pursue advanced degrees in biomedical or behavioral research. Students also interned at the School of Medicine's Institute of Human Virology, R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, and the Baltimore Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

UMB internships are opportunities "for the students to immerse themselves full time in a research environment while learning more about the workplace," says Jordan Warnick, PhD, assistant dean of the

School of Medicine. Warnick says the internship programs also help the young researchers learn the logistics of financing and other aspects of college life.

High School Biomedical Research Program

At the Dental School, students and teachers from many Maryland high schools participated in the High School Biomedical Research Program, directed by Professor Norbert Myslinski, PhD. The program included 19 students who worked in laboratories for the Program in Neuroscience and the schools of dentistry, medicine, nursing, and pharmacy.

The interns "tend to be strong science majors often from science magnet programs who arrive at UMB with a thirst for learning," says Joel Greenspan, PhD, professor and director of the Research Center for Neuroendocrine Influences on Pain at the Dental School. "They are so focused that sometimes it's hard to keep up with what they are doing and give them enough to do."

Greenspan says such community outreach is invaluable to the students by "bringing kids at an early stage into a lab to get a head start with medical professions." Each student brings a unique and refreshing



approach, Greenspan adds.

Kelson Shilling, 17, from the science magnet program at Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, Md., is interested in cancer research and says his intern experience will likely help him make a pivotal career decision: Whether to take on medical school or "go more on the research side."

He says one of the things that may help students decide is how they react to seeing "the blood and all. It's one of the things you need to know and why you take an internship," says Shilling, who is working in the laboratory of Maureen Stone, PhD, director of the Vocal Tract Visualization Laboratory in the Dental School.

Shawdae Harrison, 15,

who is in her sophomore year this fall at the Maryland Academy for Technology and Health Sciences high school in Baltimore, was very excited to be chosen for an internship. Her principal had cautioned her that UMB internships are very competitive—many students in their junior and senior years are selected.

Harrison, the second-oldest in a family of 12, loves children and hopes to go into pediatrics. She was especially pleased to land an internship in the Dental School whose community patient service brings in children every day. Harrison also hopes to learn about gene splicing and DNA testing for her national science fair entry after the 11th grade.



School of Medicine Holds Second Annual Mini-Med School for Kids

More than 30 children got a taste of medical school this summer when the University of Maryland School of Medicine held its second annual Mini-Med School for Kids at the Salvation Army's Franklin Square Boys and Girls Club summer camp in West Baltimore.

"Mini-Med School for Kids targets children from our underserved community in hopes of delivering key messages about important, and very relevant, health and lifestyle issues," says Heather Graham Phelps, manager of public relations at the School of Medicine.

The program kicked off with a lesson for the older campers about sexually transmitted infections and HIV. It was led by Ligia Peralta, MD, associate professor of pediatrics and chief of the Division of Adolescent Medicine. There was some giggling, blushing, and hiding of faces during her matter-of-fact presentation, but by the end the campers were comfortable enough to ask her important

questions about how they can protect themselves from these illnesses.

Mini-Med School for Kids continued over the next five weeks and covered such topics as diabetes, obesity and nutrition; stress relief and anger management; asthma; smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, and addictions; and heart health and exercise.

"We've formed a partnership with the School of Medicine that is really amazing," says Deborah Tyson, director of the camp. "The children wrote letters to camp benefactors about what they liked most about camp, and every one of them mentioned Mini-Med School. They tell their parents about eating healthy, exercising, not using drugs or selling drugs, not smoking or drinking, and the parents are so impressed by everything their children have learned. It's been wonderful, and we hope to have the chance to do it again next year because it is an excellent program."

Brain Bee Buzzes at Dental School

After two days of grueling competition last spring, Elena Perry of Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, Md., became the 2008 U.S. National Brain Bee Champion.

Perry represented the Washington, D.C., region, and her win qualified her to represent the U.S. in the International Brain Bee championship at the Canadian Association of Neuroscience's convention in Montreal last May, which she won.

The Brain Bee, established in 1998, draws high school contestants from across the U.S. and from other countries. This is the first year the international championship was held somewhere other than UMB.

The Brain Bee is a multipart competition that uses a variety of tests to determine high school students' knowledge of such topics as memory, sensation, emotions, intellect, brain imaging, neuroscience research, and dysfunctions such as stroke, epilepsy, Alzheimer's disease, and autism.

The International Brain Bee was founded by Norbert Myslinski, PhD, associate professor of neuroscience at the Dental School, "to motivate young men and women to learn about the brain and inspire them to consider careers in the neurosciences."

Myslinski is on a quest to boost interest in neuroscience as a career choice among young people, as well as to advance appreciation for the subject among the general public. Other braincentric programs he oversees include a summer research program for high school students, brain art and literature projects, and a variety of school and community neuroscience presentations.

Major International Brain Bee sponsors are the Dental School's Department of Biomedical Sciences; Spandana Foundation; International Brain Research Organization; Thadikonda Research Foundation, Inc.; Society for Neuroscience; Eric Braverman, MD, of PATH Medical in New York; National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health; Dana Alliance for Biomedical Research; American Neurological Association; Canadian Association of Neuroscience; and Canadian Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health, and Addiction.



Elena Perry won the U.S. National Brain Bee hosted by the University.

Student Profile: Vivien Thomas Graduate Praises Research Program

Crystal Easter, a first-year student at Stevenson University and recent graduate of the Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy in West Baltimore's Poppleton community, spent part of 2007 and 2008 in the Summer Research Program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB).

Through the program, students from Vivien Thomas apply and are selected to work in biomedical research within the health professional schools on the UMB campus and are encouraged to consider careers as health professionals and scientists.

In 2007, Easter worked in the School of Medicine's Center for Vascular and Inflammatory Diseases with Toni Antalis, PhD, professor of physiology.

Easter says, "The first year

was great. I loved working with Dr. Toni Antalis."

This past summer, Easter was placed with Richard Lichenstein, MD, associate professor of pediatrics at the School of Medicine and director of pediatric emergency medicine research.

Easter says of the internship, "It helped me to be independent. Working, especially in medicine, prepared me for the demands placed on professionals in the medical field.

"It also helped me to learn how to network and make lifetime connections."

Easter says she came back for a second internship because she wanted a new experience. "I also wanted to let others know how much fun it was the first year and to take advantage of a great oppor-



tunity like this," Easter adds.

Easter was a National Honor Society member and a Vivien T. Thomas Scholar who scored 1480 on her SAT. Currently,

she is pursuing a career in nursing at Stevenson. Easter says: "I like kids, and I want to make a difference."

University Establishes Outreach Council

Outreach to the community is as much a part of the University's heritage as is Davidge Hall. University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) students, faculty, and staff provide more than 2 million hours of service annually to residents throughout Maryland.

The University took that mission one step further this year by establishing the UMB Outreach Council. The council is made up, in part, of more than 50 faculty, staff, and students, and has initially partnered with three schools in West Baltimore—the Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy, the Diggs-Johnson Middle School, and the George Washington Elementary School—to help meet the needs of children and their families. Officials from those schools are also council members.

"We were very pleased, says Brian Sturdivant, MSW, UMB's director of community affairs, after the first of the council's bimonthly meetings. President Ramsay came and spoke about the importance of the council's work, and the faculty were very supportive and very eager. I have spoken to all three school principals and they are very excited and very much onboard."

Based on a survey, a focus group, and interviews with staff,

teachers, parents, and students, each of the three schools conducted a needs assessment. Then an action plan was created to address the needs. "As we review those action plans, we can see where we can fit in the best," says Sturdivant. Mr. Sturdivant was instrumental in promoting a paid summer internship program for Vivien Thomas students run by the School of Medicine, and mental health interventions at George Washington through the School of Social Work.

Other projects this year included the following:

- career exploration day
- youth science engagement program
- "Give Kids a Smile Day" through the Dental School
- summer research program
- tutoring
- asthma clinics at George Washington Elementary
- refurbishing an art classroom at George Washington Elementary

Not all the programs are new. Sturdivant has been working with schools near the University for years. "But this effort is more focused," he says.

For more information on the University's local outreach programs, visit www.oea.umaryland.edu/gov/community.



UMB Helps African-American Men Take Their Health to Heart in \$1 Million Cardiovascular Disease Program

A new team-building program to help African-American men in Baltimore help each other fight the deadly effects of cardiovascular disease (CVD) was announced in May by University of Maryland School of Pharmacy Dean Natalie D. Eddington, PhD, and Jon Shematek, MD, senior vice president and chief medical officer, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield.

Health experts at the news conference emphasized that treating CVD isn't difficult and often begins with treating hypertension. But they said too many African-American men don't get diagnosed until heart attacks or strokes put them in the emergency room or worse. In Baltimore, CVD killed 576 African-American men compared with only 376 Caucasian men in 2005.

The new program—MVP for Maryland Men's CardioVascular Promotion—will start with 40 African-American men with risk factors for CVD who will be enrolled through University of Maryland emergency room sites and family health care centers, local churches, and community outreach.

Those first 40 participants will have their vital signs assessed, learn how to manage healthy lifestyles, and work toward health goals during a six-month program. Each man will then recruit two more participants and serve as their mentor. The new participants will then be expected to recruit others, and so on.

The initial three-year pilot program is designed to help 600 African-American men in Baltimore live longer, healthier lives with greater access to quality, affordable health care. The men will get help finding doctors and pharmacists and will be encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles.

"The team element and focus to reduce racial disparities in health care makes the MVP program a unique endeavor and one CareFirst is proud to support," says Shematek.

Fadia Shaya, PhD, MPH, associate director of the School of Pharmacy's Center on Drugs and Public Policy, said that during a four-year federally funded program that educated 1,600 patients about hypertension and diabetes, "We noticed that few African-American men were coming in and those who did were less engaged" in their health care than other patients. That observation led to the new pro-

gram, which Shaya will lead.

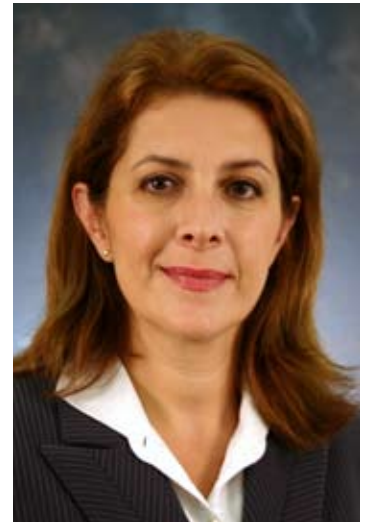
Shaya says asking each patient to recruit two more patients is "a simple model. It works in sales and other ventures. Why won't it work here?"

"CVD kills more people in Baltimore than HIV/AIDS or homicides," says Elijah Saunders, MD, professor of medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He says research shows that the disparity of a much higher incidence of the disease in African-American men is not based on genetics. High rates of heart failure in the black community, he says, are mostly due to hypertension and diabetes.

The MVP program builds on the success of Hair, Heart and Health, an inner-city program in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., funded by CareFirst and spearheaded in Baltimore by Saunders. That program brought cardiovascular health education into barbershops and beauty salons, where customers were assessed by their barber or stylist for cardiovascular risk factors and recommended for follow-up with a specialist as appropriate.

"The barbershop program was very successful because the barbershop is where you get the news, both good and bad," Saunders says.

Other groups participating in the MVP program include MEDBANK of Maryland Inc., which links qualified patients with free prescription medications; Total Health Care, which provides health services on a sliding-fee scale; and Bon Secours Baltimore Health System. The MVP Advisory Board is comprised of leaders from the University of Maryland, Baltimore and the community.



Fadia Shaya

House of Ruth Exhibit Visits UMB

More than 45 women and children died last year in Maryland as a result of domestic violence—what photographer Donna Ferrato calls “a war.” Ferrato’s work, and that of other emerging and well-known fine arts photographers from Maryland and across the nation, can be found in *A Line in the Sand*.

The portrait project was commissioned by the House of Ruth Maryland, a domestic violence center for women and children. The exhibit, which documents the efforts of Marylanders to combat domestic violence, was on display at the Health Sciences and Human Services Library from Nov. 4-30 in the Weise Gallery.

“We were very excited to bring this powerful photo exhibit to UMB,” says Nancy Gordon, senior director of University Events.

“We are very proud that the exhibit includes UMB alumni and donors such as Chief Judge Robert Bell, Barbara Himmelrich, Barbara and Ed Brody, and former Gov. William Donald Schaefer.”

The project—more than 20 interpretive portraits and short essays that provide a glimpse

into each subject’s motivations—chronicles Maryland’s battle against domestic violence and that battle’s most stalwart advocates. Some of the subjects featured in the exhibit, such as Kate Wood, a Baltimore City police officer, have been touched by domestic violence. Others, like former *Baltimore Sun* reporters Linell Smith, David Simon, and William Zorzi, and WBAL-TV reporter Jayne Miller, have promoted awareness of the issue and educated the public through media coverage. Others include lawmakers, politicians, and volunteers such as Joseph Curran and his daughter Catherine Curran O’Malley, Arthur and Patricia Modell, and Joe Ehrmann.

“Domestic violence runs rampant in our society and strikes fear in thousands of women and children,” says Carole Alexander, the executive director of the House of Ruth Maryland. “This exhibit is our way of challenging the silence that surrounds domestic violence and profiling people who have made a real difference in the lives of children and women in Maryland.”

Designed by Alex Castro of Castro Arts, the show includes

work by a dozen photographers in addition to Ferrato. “This is one of those magic moments in an artist’s life when it’s a joy to work with all the artists and with a place like House of Ruth,” says Castro. “The main thing is the project includes exceptionally good photography with work on an exceptionally important topic.”

After stopping at the University of Maryland, Baltimore,

the exhibit, which has traveled throughout the state, will be shown at the Baltimore City Circuit Court; St. Joseph’s Medical Center; the Miller Senate Office Building in Annapolis, Md.; and Towson University. For more information, visit www.alineinthesand.org.



DID YOU KNOW?

The UMB Research Park Corp., which oversees the development of the University of Maryland BioPark, is dedicated to supporting community development initiatives and has dispersed \$87,000 over the last three years to projects in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Community Calendar

Ongoing

George Washington Elementary School EFFORT Fitness Program. University of Maryland students offer health and nutrition workshops as part of this program. Exercise sessions will be open to the public Tuesdays, 6:15-7:15 p.m., and Fridays, 5-6 p.m., through Jan. 30, 2009, at George Washington Elementary School, 800 Scott St. For more information, contact Marc LaVeau at 410-396-1445.

A Bridge to Academic Excellence. The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy offers tutoring on Saturdays for middle and high school students interested in pursuing professional careers and who have difficulty in math, science, and English classes. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, Pharmacy Learning Center, 110 N. Pine St. For more information, contact Margaret Hayes at 410-706-6586 or mhayes@rx.umaryland.edu.

Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy Engage Tutors Program. Tutoring for students currently enrolled at Vivien Thomas who are preparing for high school assessments in algebra, English, American government, and biology. Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

Jan. 9-23, 2009: Diggs-Johnson Middle School Art Project. Artwork of students attending Diggs-Johnson Middle School will be on display in the Weise Gallery. Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-midnight, Friday 8 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-midnight, Health Sciences and Human Services Library, University of Maryland, Baltimore, 601 W. Lombard St. Exhibit is open to the public.

Jan. 17-18: University of Maryland School of Pharmacy Leadership Camp. Diggs-Johnson Middle School, 1300 Herkimer St. All Diggs-Johnson students are welcome to participate. For more information, contact Brian Sturdivant at 410-706-1678.

Feb. 1: Youthworks registration begins. Sponsored in conjunction with Baltimore's Office of Employment Development, Youthworks provides high school students with opportunities to gain meaningful work experiences, explore career choices, and receive mentoring in various professions from University of Maryland, Baltimore employees. Contact the Mayor's Office of Employment Development at 410-396-5627.

Feb. 6: Give Kids a Smile Day. 9 a.m.-2 p.m, Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry, 31 S. Greene St. Students from the University of Maryland Dental School will offer dental screenings, and referrals for follow-up care if necessary, for children enrolled at George Washington Elementary School in Washington Village. Transportation provided. For more information, contact Marc LaVeau at 410-396-1445.

March 20-21: National Brain Bee. Neuroscience competition for high school students with three levels of competition: an optional school level, a local level, and the international championship. Open to high school students across Maryland. For dates of local competitions and more information, contact Norbert Myslinski, PhD, at 410-706-7258 or nrm001@dental.umaryland.edu.



In This Issue



UMB & the Community is a biannual digest that highlights the University of Maryland, Baltimore's community outreach in West Baltimore.

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