

HOT NEWS

SAVE THE DATE

12/13/2021

Fall Stressbuster (for students/volunteers)

12/13/2021

Last Day of Fall Classes

12/22/2021

Undergraduate Commencement

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Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2021

Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

On September 25th, the Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat was held at Centennial Park in Ellicott City, MD. The Program Office sponsored the family meeting, retreat, transportation, and partially subsidized the meals. A virtual family meeting was held for the students and staff before the students were transported to the park. The Meyerhoff family gathered to welcome the scholars to the new academic year and provide program and council updates. The students participated in teambuilding activities and cohort competitions.



The Meyerhoff Family Ready to Feast



Dr. Hrabowski (UMBC President) engages with the Meyerhoff Scholars



Alexandra Seas (M29 and UMBC alumni) engages with the Meyerhoff Family



The Spirit of True Grit Focus, Focus, Focus

Photos provided courtesy of Dr. Antonios Seas

Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

By all accounts, the Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat held at Centennial Park in Ellicott City, MD was a tremendous success! The agenda for the afternoon included a barbecue picnic lunch, teambuilding activities, cohort Olympics, and remarks by several Meyerhoff Scholars to include select alumni, the Meyerhoff Program Office Staff, and UMBC President, Dr. Freeman Hrabowski.



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

Dr. Hrabowski asked a representative from each cohort to provide the group with words of advice. One of the cohort representatives said that as we emerge from the pandemic, we should give grace to ourselves, impart grace on others, and always lend others a helping hand. Dr. Hrabowski told the scholars that the most important thing they could do is “*do your best.*” He said, some of the people that have done the most outstanding work, may not have always gotten A’s, but they gave it their all. He implored the scholars to always give it their all.



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

Dr. Hrabowski entertained a few questions from the students.

Q: How are you going to enjoy your retirement?

A: President Hrabowski said he announced that he would be retiring from UMBC at the end of the academic year, but he was not retiring permanently (smile). He mentioned that he would be working with university presidents and boards around the country as a coach/consultant and that he was in the process of writing another book. Dr. Hrabowski said that he would be our public relations person (smile), always sharing with others the wonderful things students are doing at UMBC.

Q. Name one of your favorite movies?

A. Just Mercy (a story about a Harvard graduate, Bryan Stevenson, that traveled to Alabama to defend those wrongly condemned or those not afforded proper legal representation). Dr. Hrabowski also mentioned that he enjoyed watching The Blacklist on Netflix while exercising.

Q. Who are your mentors?

A. My parents, grandmother (she loved to read and she fought for voting rights), Dr. King, my teachers, pastors, and more. Dr. Hrabowski said two of his academic heroes were Mary McLeod Bethune (she was a good friend of Eleanor Roosevelt) and his prior college president, Jerome H. Holland, who became the first black to become Ambassador to Sweden. Dr. Hrabowski went on to say, “*nobody inspires me like our students.*”

Q: How are you feeling today

A: I am feeling so blessed.

In closing, Dr. Hrabowski led the scholars in reciting “*Dreams*” by Langston Hughes.

*Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.*

*Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.*



Dr. Hrabowski engages with the Meyerhoff Scholars



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

Alexandra Seas (M29), a recent UMBC alumni and Meyerhoff and U-RISE Scholar, shared her thoughts with the students. She said, the universe will put you where you are supposed to be. It does not mean that you will not have to work for it because you will. She implored the scholars to stay in touch with the Meyerhoff Program staff because they care about you and your future. Alexandra is currently pursuing a MD/PhD at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Best of luck Alexandra!



The MPA would also like to thank her father (Dr. Antonios Seas) for capturing many of the photos that are included in this newsletter, various other newsletters, and other MPA presentations. In addition to taking photos every year, for the past six years, Dr. Seas has provided a slide show presentation for the MPA's Senior Reception and Selection Weekend events each year. Well done!



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

The Meyerhoff Scholars, Meyerhoff Program staff, Dr. Hrabowski, and alumni shared their insights and advice with the group. Then, it was time for the teambuilding and competitions to begin. The scholars started with a pie eating contest and subsequently participated in the cohort Olympics, which included plenty of team building activities. For the second year in a row, the M32's won the Cohort Olympics. Congratulations to the M32's and the other Cohort participants!



The food for the afternoon was excellent! All enjoyed hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, fried and barbecued chicken, vegetarian options, side dishes, desserts, and an assortment of beverages.



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat



Meyerhoff Program Fall Family Meeting and Retreat

The MPA would like to thank those that planned, supported, and participated in this year's fall retreat. Meyerhoff parent contributions partially subsidized the catering expense (approximately \$5,000) and they make events like this possible every year. Please consider making an annual, one time, or recurring donation such that we can continue to support events like this, whereby we provide nourishment for our students minds, bodies, and spirits. For additional details, see pages 11 - 13.



*Helping
Our
Students
Hold
Fast
To
Their
Dreams...*



MPA Supports Students

The **Meyerhoff Parents Association's (MPA)** mission is to support and perpetuate the Meyerhoff Scholars Program by fostering unification among scholarship recipients (past and present), as well as their families. Parents of Meyerhoff Scholars are automatically members of the MPA and your participation in the student-centric sponsored events is highly encouraged. Please consider becoming actively involved with the MPA as a cohort representative, committee volunteer, and/or donor. Volunteerism is the best way to get and remain connected. There is no better way to remain informed about the program and contribute to its success!



Your financial support of the MPA is important. A suggested giving level of \$100 annually or a \$400 one time gift for all 4 years per member family funds student activities sponsored by the MPA and/or Meyerhoff Scholars, along with conference registration and travel assistance. Donate to the UMBC Foundation and support the MPA by clicking on the link below.



Support the Scholars by supporting the Meyerhoff Parents Association.

You can help by making a personal contribution to the UMBC Foundation of an amount that is best for you using the one-time gift, scheduled payments or recurring gift options.

Go online to make your gift at

<https://gritstarter.umbc.edu/meyerhoff-parents>



Safe and Secure Giving

\$15,000 Donation Target (FY 2022)



The parent-elected Board of Officers provide support to program activities and students. They work in conjunction with the Meyerhoff Program Office, the Meyerhoff Student Council, and Alumni Advisory Board, as this demonstrates support and trust in the Meyerhoff Staff and the overarching goals of the program.

Regular communications to parents and scholars are normally disseminated via e-mail from the MPA and the Program Office about upcoming events that parents or scholars may find informative or beneficial to achieving their goals.

You may contact the MPA Board Officers at umbcmpa@gmail.com or obtain additional information at <http://meyerhoff.umbc.edu/parents/meyerhoff-parents-association/>.

For general scholarship questions, visit meyerhoff@umbc.edu or contact the Meyerhoff Scholars Program Office at 410-455-3139.



MPA FUNDRAISER

Parents and Guardians,

We are encouraging parents and guardians of the M-32 and M-33 cohorts to participate in MPA Polo Shirt Fundraiser, but also welcome parents from all cohorts to support the fundraiser.

During FY2020 and FY2021, shirt orders were placed by mail and shirts were mailed. As the university returns to normalcy, we are sponsoring some non-virtual events with added expenses. Will you help the MPA celebrate our scholars? That may sound like an unusual question, but we really do need your support and participation.

Past freshman cohorts have generously supported the fundraiser by helping us raise a significant portion of our annual budget.

The MPA wants to support the full richness of the student-centric programs and activities of past years. Our scholars look to MPA members, like you, as the keeper of our traditions.

Parents love to show their engagement in the Meyerhoff Parents Association by purchasing and wearing a logo embossed polo shirt during our sponsored events, picking up or dropping off their scholars at the beginning and end of the semester, UMBC family day, and during the MPA Townhall meetings.

Please show your enthusiasm by partnering with us on this fundraiser. Print and fill out the order form on page 13 and submit it along with your payment.

Thank you in advance for your support!





MEYERHOFF PARENTS ASSOCIATION (MPA) Polo Shirt Order Form

(Sizing is based on men's sizes. The shirts are well-made and do not shrink.)

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Scholar Name _____ Cohort _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Cell Phone _____ E-mail address _____

Sleeve Type	Size (Limited Inventory)	Cost	10% Discount (until inventory sold)	U.S. Shipping and Handling @ \$7 each (Free Shipping until UMBC reopens for MPA events)	Total
Short Sleeve	<input type="checkbox"/> Small	\$40.00	(\$4.00)		\$
	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Large				
Short Sleeve	<input type="checkbox"/> XLarge	\$45.00	(\$4.50)		\$
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2XL				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3XL	\$55.00	(\$5.50)		\$
Long Sleeve	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium				

I will pick up at _____ Please mail shirt(s) to address above

Please send order form and payment (make check or money order payable to **UMBC Foundation**, and note **MPA ACCT #05-20127** in memo field) to:

UMBC – Meyerhoff Scholars Program
1000 Hilltop Circle, Sherman Hall Room 218
Baltimore, MD 21250

Any questions: Contact: umbcempa@gmail.com

OFFICE USE ONLY: Received: _____ Check/MO date: _____ Check/MO #: _____

Picked up by: _____ Pick up date: _____ Mailed by/date: _____ / _____

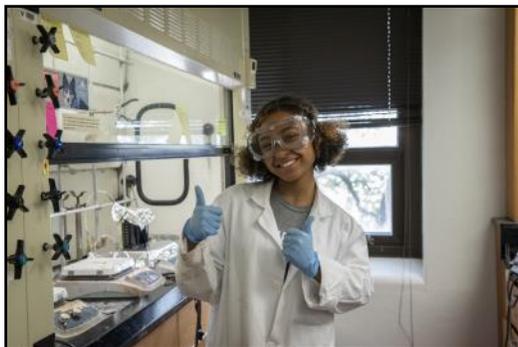
Funds raised are administered by the UMBC Foundation, Inc., for the benefit of UMBC.

Revised January 2021



How I Spent My Summer: Meyerhoff Stories

Internships are an integral part of the scholar's experience. Many students find their passion through hands-on work solving real-world problems. A synopsis of the 2021 Meyerhoff summer internship experiences is below.



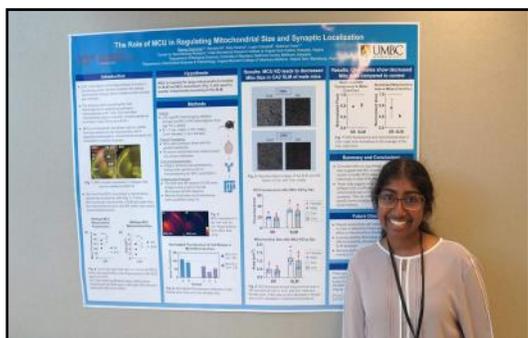
Kaylyn Stewart, M32, Materials Chemistry Texas A&M University

Kaylyn participated in the Sustainable Chemistry Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program. It focused on interdisciplinary projects in sustainable chemistry. Her project involved the fabrication of coatings with precise control of wettability. Kaylyn said she had an amazing experience conducting research this past summer. She was able to get a feel for what graduate school would be like and she found the research process and the lab work to be enjoyable. She said, *"It felt great to work on something that could have an impact."* Additionally, she met some really good people, made amazing friends, and was able to explore and have fun in Texas, as well!



Briah Barksdale, M30, Microbiology Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Briah's summer experience at Vanderbilt was nothing short of amazing! She made new friends, gained new mentors, and learned new lab techniques. She has been reassured that Vanderbilt is a wonderful institution to attend for the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). Every MSTP student she communicated with acknowledged how supportive the program was in every aspect. She interned in a lab that focused on the bacteria causing urinary tract infections. Briah said, *"This was exciting for me because it paired women's health and immunology."* This summer taught me that research is about troubleshooting and team collaboration. I couldn't be more thankful for this experience!"



Rianna Zacharias, M30, Neuroscience Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine

Rianna participated in a summer program that gave students the opportunity to participate in hands-on, hypothesis-driven research in an area of translational neurobiology at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute in Roanoke, VA. She studied the role of mitochondrial calcium uniporter (MCU) in regulating mitochondrial size and synaptic localization. The program exposed Rianna and other students to the broad scope of fundamental and translational neurobiology, experimental learning, creative problem solving, and more.



Michael Anoruo, M32, Robotics University of Pennsylvania

Michael participated in SUNFEST or Summer Undergraduate Fellowship in Sensor Technologies, a unique program that provided students with hands on research during the summer in the area of sensor technologies. Michael collaborated with his faculty mentor, Dr. Ani Hsieh to develop robotic algorithms and platforms for robots to better sample and monitor marine environments. They focused on developing mapping, estimation, and control strategies to allow robots to harness the environment dynamics for motion, planning, control, and coordination. His internship was a hybrid of in person and virtual learning.



How I Spent My Summer: Meyerhoff Stories

The list below is by no means all-inclusive of the 2021 Meyerhoff undergraduate summer internships but this sub-group does highlight the breadth and depth of the internship experience. Meyerhoff Scholars, keep up the good work!

Meyerhoff Scholar	Cohort	Name of Institution	Project Title
Dorian Luckie	29	InfoSysNetworks	General Internship w/InfoSysNetworks
Biniam Teferedegn	29	UMBC	UMBC Research
Favour Nwagugo	30	Brown University	Effects of Dioxin Exposure on Nervous System Development in Zebrafish
Zaria Oliver	30	Carnegie Mellon University	Control System Modeling for Closed Loop Control Ventilator
Rianna Zacharias	30	Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at Virginia Tech Carilion	The Role of MCU in Regulating Mitochondrial Size and Synaptic Localization
Christopher Bain	30	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Using Supervised Machine Learning Methods to Create a Gene based ALS Predictor from Postmortem Transcriptomics Data
Dexter Merritt, Jr.	30	Purdue University	Computational Combustion Study of Additively Manufactured Solid Propellants
Duyen Bui	30	UNC Chapel Hill	Utilizing Palmitoleic Acid to Enhance Bactericidal Activity of Antibiotics in Gram Positive Bacteria
Nneamaka Iwobi	30	University of Minnesota	Flavor Compound enhancement of electronic cigarette liquid consumption and preference in mice
Ridhi Chaudhary	30	University of Nebraska, Medical Center	Impact of COVID-19 Infection During Pregnancy on Neonatal Birth Outcomes
Briah Barksdale	30	Vanderbilt University Medical Center	Characterizing the Acid Resistance Mechanisms of Uropathogenic Escherichia coli
Tobi Majekodunmi	31	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Development of a Heat Flux sensor for High Heat Flux Environments
Ezinne Oguguo	31	MIT	Could Cryoprotective Genes from Freeze-Tolerant Organisms Be the Key to Longer Preservation of Human Organs?
Justyn Bunkley	31	Morgan State University	3D Modeling, Design Analysis of the Rocket's Tail Fins using SolidWorks and OpenRocket Simulator and GPS Systems Testing of a Liquid Propellant Rocket
Senali Dansou	31	Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania	Quantification of citric acid cycle intermediates using Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry
Naiyah Lewis	31	UMBC	UMBC Research
Sahaadat Hamed-Owens	31	UMBC	UMBC Research
Rachel Myers	31	University of California, San Diego	Improving Drug Loading of Rifampicin in Porous Silicon Nanoparticles for Tuberculosis Treatment
Jarrett Lloyd	32	Howard University, NOAA	Understanding the Correlation Between County Income and Air Pollution, PM2.5 and Ozone
Kaylyn Stewart	32	Texas A&M University	Fabrication of Coatings with Precise Control of Wettability
Michael Anoruo	32	The University of Pennsylvania	Robots for River and Ocean Monitoring
Anjayooluwa Adegboyo	32	UMBC	UMBC Research
Kimberly Christian	32	University of Alabama	Vortex made polymersomes: a simple and efficient strategy for small hydrophilic molecules administration



MPA Family Town Hall

On October 16th, the MPA hosted the 2021 Town Hall meeting. This year, it was conducted virtually and by all accounts, it was a tremendous success! Mr. Dexter Merritt (MPA Editor) served as the Master of Ceremonies for the program. The agenda included a Welcome by MPA President, Mrs. Darlene Brooks. Remarks were given by an extraordinary group of speakers including Dr. Freeman Hrabowski (UMBC President), our featured guest speaker Ms. Olubukola Abiona (M25 alumni, NIH Fellow, and current Case Western Reserve University MD-PhD student), Mr. Logan Lineburg (Meyerhoff Student Council President), Mr. Keith Harmon (Director, Meyerhoff Scholars Program), and Mrs. Earnestine Baker (Executive Director Emerita, Meyerhoff Scholars Program).

YOU ARE INVITED
TO OUR 2021 TOWN HALL

Hosted by

**MEYERHOFF
PARENTS
ASSOCIATION** | HELPING OUR STUDENTS
HOLD FAST TO THEIR DREAMS...

OCT 16

SATURDAY 11-12:30 PM
RSVP HERE BY
OCT 9, 11:59 PM

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION @
[Contact information for MPA](#)

EMAIL QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS
umbcempa@gmail.com

*Photo and cover design provided courtesy of
Mrs. Chantal Ireland and Ms. Sade Adegboyo*



MPA Family Town Hall



Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, III
President, UMBC



Ms. Olubukola Abiona (M25)
NIH Fellow & MD-PhD Student at
Case Western Reserve University

The MPA provided a synopsis of the major activities and accomplishments completed this past year (the annual welcome back retreat, various stressbusters, dinners for on campus scholars prior to the Thanksgiving break, multiple newsletters, and more) and provided an accounting of the organization’s finances. The MPA report was presented by Mrs. Shelandra Burton (MPA Vice President) and Mr. Peter Mills (MPA Assistant Vice President). The Finance report was presented by Mrs. Denise Johnson (MPA Treasurer).

The 2021–2022 MPA nominations and elections process was presented by Mrs. Regina Bracey (M25 Alumni Representative). The elections were held online using Election Runner software. Near the conclusion of the meeting, the election results were sent to the voters and this information was shared with the greater MPA body via email.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers! The MPA would like to send a special “*Thank You*” to those officers and cohort representatives that are currently serving, many of whom will continue to support the MPA in their current capacity or a different capacity. The MPA would like to thank all of the speakers, parents, scholars, alumni, Meyerhoff Program Office staff, and other UMBC stakeholders for their participation, support, and ongoing engagement throughout the year. The Meyerhoff Scholars Program, as represented by each of you, is held in high regard!

The incoming Board of Directors (*see page 15*) will assume responsibility prior to the end of the year. A transition meeting is being planned for the latter part of November.



Meyerhoff Parents Association Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

<p>President</p>  <p>Dexter R. Merritt, Sr. (M30)</p>	<p>Vice President</p>  <p>Helen Pruitt (M31)</p>	<p>Assistant Vice President</p>  <p>Peter Mills (M32)</p>
<p>Recording Secretary</p>  <p>Dawn Vance (M33)</p>	<p>Corresponding Secretary</p>  <p>Carrie Noble Byrum (M33)</p>	<p>Treasurer</p>  <p>Darlene Pernell-Bunkley (M31)</p>
<p>Assistant Treasurer</p>  <p>Sherene Maitland (M32)</p>	<p>Editor</p>  <p>Vacant</p>	<p>Historian</p>  <p>Darlene W. Brooks (M29)</p>

Note: The new Board of Directors (Officers and Cohort Representatives) was elected during the October 16, 2021 MPA Town Hall meeting.



Meyerhoff Parents Association Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

M33



Jorina Addison

M33



Jill Bispels

M33



Michelle Brooks

M33



Florence Parry

M32



Sade Adegboyo

M32



Chantal Ireland

M32 & M23



Justyna Sardin

M32



Rosalind Muchiri

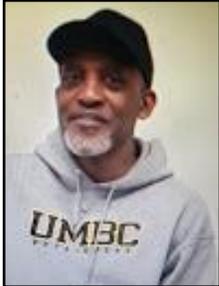
M31



Mehrdad Tondravi



Meyerhoff Parents Association Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

<p>M31</p>  <p>Shelandra Burton</p>	<p>M31</p>  <p>Shelton Burton</p>	<p>M31</p>  <p>Rodney Isabell</p>
<p>M30</p>  <p>Florence Okeh</p>	<p>M30</p>  <p>Leslie Sands</p>	<p>Alum M29</p>  <p>Vanessa Chandler King</p>
<p>Alum M29</p>  <p>Alisa A. Wallace</p>	<p>Alum M28</p>  <p>Veronica Bell</p>	<p>Alum M28</p>  <p>Denise Johnson</p>



Meyerhoff Parents Association Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

<p>Alum M28</p>  <p>Kelly Jones</p>	<p>Alum M27</p>  <p>Kenneth Dixon</p>	<p>Alum M27</p>  <p>Renita Prevot Smith</p>
<p>Alum M25</p>  <p>Regina J. Bracey</p>	<p>Alum M25</p>  <p>Karen Furman</p>	<p>Alum M25 & M29</p>  <p>Antonios Seas</p>
<p>Alum M23</p>  <p>Deborah Nazon</p>	<p>Alum M13</p>  <p>Edie Windsor</p>	



Welcome, M33 Meyerhoff Scholars!

At the conclusion of Summer Bridge, the Meyerhoff Program welcomed 48 students as M33 Meyerhoff cohort members. This year's cohort was selected from a competitive number of applications. While the modality of the 2021 Summer Bridge was virtual, students were still engaged in race, science and society, and math courses; chemistry, engineering, and computing workshops; professional development seminars; academic and career advising; mentorship; and virtual site visits. As you journey through the fall semester, the Meyerhoff Family knows you have the talent, tenacity, and grit to succeed.



M33s at the 2021 Fall Retreat - Photo provided courtesy of Mr. Victor Omokehinde.



Multiple Meyerhoff Cohorts at the 2021 Fall Retreat - Photo provided courtesy of Mr. Victor Omokehinde.



Meyerhoff Student Council Update

The **Meyerhoff Student Council** provides an opportunity for Meyerhoff Scholars to represent their cohort, act as a liaison between their peers and staff members, and contribute to initiatives that strengthen our program family. Elections are conducted at the end of Summer Bridge and in the Spring for the rising Juniors finishing their second year. I would like to thank the **M29** student representatives that completed their service (Tobias Coombs, Nidhi Naik, and Jordan Troutman). Congratulations to the **M31** junior representatives that were re-elected (Ishanathan Guteng, Naiyah Lewis, and D’Juan Moreland), and a special congratulations to the newly elected **M33** first-year representatives (Evalynn Ellison, Nathaniel Glover, and Gabriel Otubu). *See photo below.* The Council is excited to have you on our team!



Photo provided courtesy of Logan Lineburg

As our campus transitions further from virtual to in-person settings, we aim to continue initiatives from prior years and re-instate ones that were not feasible online. To achieve this, we have collaboratively set three unique, complementary, guiding principles: ***Family, Tradition, and Safety***. Striving to emphasize the importance of family and supporting one another, establishing sustainable methods for traditional events, and respecting the safety of our community to ensure we move forward in good health throughout the continuing COVID-19 crisis are key priorities. The Council intends to reach these goals through the continued use of committees. This year, we have groups focusing on Adulting, Connections, Events, Mental Health, Social Justice, and the Yearbook.

I wish everyone the best of luck this academic year! Thank you to all of the parents and the MPA for your continued support!



Contributing Writer - Logan Lineburg
M30, Meyerhoff Student Council President



Meyerhoff Alumni In The News

Congratulations to M8 alumnus Kafui Dzirasa, MD, PhD, PI! He was recently named to the newest class of 33 Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) investigators and he was elected to the National Academy of Medicine.

The first announcement is a tremendous achievement for Dr. Dzirasa and his research team, and it marks the first HHMI appointment of a UMBC Meyerhoff Scholar alum. New investigators receive approximately \$9 million over a seven-year term, which is renewable pending a successful scientific review. The newest class of HHMI investigators were selected from more than 800 eligible applicants.

Additionally, Dr. Dzirasa is one of 100 new members elected to the National Academy of Medicine. This announcement recognizes his “*seminal contributions to the neuroscience of emotion and mental illness*” as well as his pioneering research methods. It also honors his “*contributions to society through science policy and advocacy, a commitment to mentoring, and support for efforts to build a diverse and inclusive scientific workforce,*” carrying forward the values of UMBC’s Meyerhoff Scholars Program.

Dr. Dzirasa (Dr. Kaf as many of you know him) visits UMBC once a month to mentor and engage program scholars. The Meyerhoff Family will be sure to celebrate these historic accomplishments when he returns. For more details, please read the HHMI and UMBC press releases below, and view Dr. Dzirasa’s website.

<https://www.hhmi.org/news/hhmi-invests-300-million-33-new-investigators>

<https://news.umbc.edu/umbc-alumnus-kafui-dzirasa-is-named-an-hhmi-investigator-elected-to-the-national-academy-of-medicine/>

<https://www.dzirasalabs.com/>



Kafui Dzirasa, MD, PhD, PI
Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Duke University School of Medicine

Congratulations to M10 alumnus Dr. Erwin Cabrera! On August 25th, Dr. John Nader and the Farmingdale State College Presidential Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion selection committee announced the selection of Dr. Erwin Cabrera and Darien Hunt as 2021 award recipients.



Dr. Erwin Cabrera
RAM Program Director, PI
Farmingdale State College
State University of New York

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).



Meyerhoff Alumni In The News

Comedian Wayne Brady hosted the **2021 Ebony Power 100** event on October 23rd in Los Angeles, CA. The ceremony included six individual awards. **Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett (M16)** was honored with the **Innovator of the Year** award.

On October 28th, the Partnership for Public Service held its 20th annual Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, awarding medals to federal employees who have made significant contributions to our nation. **Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett** and **Dr. Barney Graham** were awarded the Federal Employee of the Year medals for conducting groundbreaking research that led to the development of highly effective vaccines in record time that are protecting hundreds of millions of people from contracting the deadly coronavirus that swept across the globe in 2020 and 2021. **Congratulations to Dr. Corbett and Dr. Graham!**



Barney Graham, M.D., Ph.D.

Former Deputy Director, Vaccine Research Center
National Institutes of Health

Kizzmekia Corbett, Ph.D.

Former Research Fellow, Vaccine Research Center
National Institutes of Health

Note: Earlier this year, Dr. Corbett joined the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health as an Assistant Professor of Immunology and Infectious Diseases

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).

Each year, the UMBC Alumni Association celebrates UMBC graduates and faculty who have made outstanding contributions to the University, their profession, and their communities. **Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett** (*pictured above*) and **Dr. Letitia Dzirasa (M11)** were honored with the other 2021 award recipients on October 20th. **Congratulations Dr. Corbett and Dr. Dzirasa!**



Dr. Letitia Dzirasa

Commissioner of Health
Baltimore City Health Department

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).



Meyerhoff Alumni In The News

Meyerhoff alumni Dr. Immanuel Williams is sponsoring the “Data Science Academy,” a 3-month virtual program comprised of courses in Data Carpentry, Statistics, and Machine Learning through his organization GATO365. Many of you will recall that Dr. Williams taught several virtual UMBC courses this past summer involving data science and analytics.

More details concerning the GATO365 Data Science Academy can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

Bereavement Notices and Condolences

The Meyerhoff Family extends heartfelt condolences to the family of **Devonte Quasie-Woode (M24)**. The funeral service took place on October 30th at First United Methodist Church of Hyattsville, Hyattsville, MD.



Devonte Quasie-Woode

Please keep the Quasie-Woode family in your prayers.





News You Can Use

UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski to Retire in Spring 2022 after Three Decades of Transformational Leadership

After more than three decades of selfless service and support for the UMBC community, President Hrabowski has announced his plans to retire at the end of this academic year. During his years at UMBC, Dr. Hrabowski has lifted the national profile of our university, guiding us through challenges and milestone moments that made us who we are. He has empowered us all to become our best selves. Dr. Hrabowski has taught us what it means to be a leader, and he has set the bar for university leadership across the country.

Watch President Hrabowski's announcement by clicking on this [link](#).



Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, III
President, UMBC

UMBC graduates more Black students who go on to earn doctorates in natural sciences and engineering than any other U.S. college

It has been said that success occurs when opportunity meets preparation. The proof is in the results. According to the National Science Foundation (NSF), UMBC is the number one baccalaureate institution for African American undergraduates who go on to earn PhD's in the natural sciences and engineering, as well as doctorates in the life sciences, mathematics, and computer science.

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).



Forbes Ranks UMBC Among the Nation’s Top 50 Public Universities

Forbes listed UMBC among the nation’s top 150 colleges— and top 50 public universities—in a new rankings announced in September 2021. UMBC was also among the top three universities in Maryland on the list, alongside the University of Maryland, College Park, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).

UMBC Sets the National Standard in 2022 U.S. News Best Colleges Ranking

UMBC is among the best of the best in undergraduate teaching and innovation. *“What has always set UMBC apart is the people”* says President Freeman Hrabowski. *“Year after year, these rankings illustrate the many ways in which our faculty and staff work to support the success and well-being of our students.”*

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).

Princeton Review Highlights UMBC as a University that “wants every student to succeed”

UMBC’s profile in *“The Best 387 Colleges”* highlights the university’s academic strengths and supportive community spirit. At UMBC, says one student, *“they provide you with the tools, people, and resources to make sure you get where you want to go in life.”*

Read more by clicking on this [link](#).

Nominate Students for the Meyerhoff Program

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program invites your nominations for the thirty-fourth cohort! The program is open to all high-achieving high school seniors who plan to pursue undergraduate studies in STEM.

To read more about the benefits and eligibility, and nominate one or more students, please visit this [link](#).



Dealing with Disappointment: How to Coach Your College Student to Handle Adversity

As parents, we all want our children to succeed, but there is no success without some adversity and disappointment. Please read the article below. It speaks to how our scholars can deal with the disappointments they may encounter during their life journey and how parents can support their children.

Click on [link](#).

Celebrating Student Successes

As we help our students deal with some adversity and disappointment, it's important that we celebrate their successes and communicate some of the factors that come into play relative to student success. The following articles were posted to the College Parent of America website. Please click on the links below.

[Ten Factors in Student Success](#)

[A Reminder to Celebrate Student Success](#)

Protocol for UMBC Visitors

As UMBC re-opened the physical campus for Fall 2021, the following guidelines were issued. Campus visitors who attend in-person events or activities must comply with the following safety requirements.

Click on [link](#).

COVID-19 Updates

Please continue to observe key campus COVID-19 safety measures.

For campus updates, click on [link](#).



Additional Student Resources

Retriever Courage is UMBC's initiative to strengthen campus prevention and response efforts related to incidents of sex discrimination and sexual violence/misconduct.



UMBC encourages those who have observed or experienced sexual violence/misconduct to seek support as needed at any time. There are many resources available on campus and in the community that offer confidential medical support, confidential psychological/emotional support, and interim protective measures (e.g., no-contact orders, housing adjustments, academic concerns).

For emergency situations, contact campus police via 410-455-5555 or local police via 911.

UMBC Public Health Dashboard

This dashboard provides timely data about the prevalence of COVID-19 within UMBC's main campus, based on UMBC's on-campus testing and reported results from off campus testing among UMBC faculty, staff, and students who are approved to be on campus this fall.

Visit the dashboard at the Retriever Ready Fall 2021 site <https://covid19.umbc.edu/>. Please direct COVID related questions to covid19@umbc.edu.

You can also visit this site for more information: <https://covid19.umbc.edu/testing-tracking/umbc-public-health-dashboard/>.

Stay Connected



Register for the **UMBC Family Connection Newsletter** to stay up-to-date on important deadlines, upcoming events, and campus happenings.

Families have this space where they can stay informed and stay connected.

It also provides a platform for families to connect with one another and with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. No password is needed to access the page.

Visit <https://familyconnection.umbc.edu/> for more information.



Letter from the Editor



On behalf of the MPA, I would like to congratulate and welcome the M33 Meyerhoff Scholars and their parents and/or guardians to the Meyerhoff family! You have made an excellent choice in selecting UMBC as a higher learning institution.

For over three decades, the Meyerhoff Scholars Program has been on the forefront of efforts to increase diversity among future leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and related fields. Since its inception in 1988, the Meyerhoff Scholars program has graduated more than 1,500 students. More than 500 Meyerhoff Scholars have earned PhD, MD, or joint MD-PhD degrees. According to the National Science Foundation (NSF), UMBC is the number one baccalaureate institution for African American undergraduates who go on to earn PhDs in the natural sciences and engineering, as well as doctorates in the life sciences, mathematics, and computer science.

As a teenager, my father told me, “*The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary.*” M33s, as you journey through the fall semester, the Meyerhoff Family knows you have the talent, tenacity, and grit to succeed.

At the October 16th MPA Town Hall meeting, the Meyerhoff parent body selected a new Board of Directors (Officers and Cohort Representatives) for the 2021-2022 year. Congratulations to the newly elected board!

I would like to extend a special “*Thank You*” to the current MPA Board led by our President, Mrs. Darlene Brooks. She and her team have done a phenomenal job! As the new board assumes responsibility, we are delighted that many of the current officers and cohort representatives will continue to support the MPA in their current capacity or a different capacity. The MPA, as represented by each of you, is held in high regard!

Dexter R. Merritt, Sr.
M30 Parent & MPA Editor

Note: *The Editor position is currently vacant for the 2021-2022 Board of Directors. Parents of Meyerhoff Scholars are eligible to serve. For information concerning the Editor duties, please click on this [link](#), select Parent Association Bylaws, and view the duties under the Editor portion of the document. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please send an email to umbcmpa@gmail.com with the title **NEWSLETTER COPY**. Include your name, cohort designation, email address, and phone number, and someone will contact you to discuss the next steps.*



Contact Us!

Meyerhoff Parents Association
c/o UMBC/Meyerhoff Scholars Program
1000 Hilltop Circle
Sherman Hall 218
Baltimore, MD 21250
umbcmpa@gmail.com



Photo provided courtesy of the UMBC Foundation

Note: *If you are interested in volunteering to support any of the upcoming MPA activities or the Meyerhoff Program in general, please send an email to umbcmpa@gmail.com with the title VOLUNTEER COPY. Your assistance is welcome!*

Don't Miss Out!

Don't miss out on important information that affects you and your student. Make sure you're receiving the most current information about the Meyerhoff Program by keeping your contact information up-to-date.



Parents, please update your contact information via this link:

**Contact Information
Survey**



*Helping Our Students Hold Fast to Their
Dreams...*

