

Letters to the UMB Community

Founders Week Award Winners Announced

July 31, 2019

To the UMB Community:

Every fall, we dedicate one week to commemorating UMB's rich history and celebrating the future we're building together. Among the highlights of Founders Week is recognizing the extraordinary work of our faculty and staff. Four awards are given every year, each signifying outstanding accomplishment in one facet of our mission. I'm delighted to announce the recipients of our 2019 Founders Week Awards.

Entrepreneur of the Year

Robert K. Ernst, PhD

School of Dentistry

Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis

Through cutting-edge research and entrepreneurship, Dr. Ernst is among the scientists leading the fight against sepsis, a blood-borne bacterial infection that kills someone in this country every two minutes. Dr. Ernst studies the molecular basis by which bacteria modify the lipid component of their membrane, and how these alterations affect normal host innate immune system responses, possibly resulting in septic shock.

In 2014, Dr. Ernst and his UMB colleague David Goodlett, PhD, professor in the School of Pharmacy, launched Pataigin (Irish for "pathogen"), a company aiming to commercialize technology that develops a "barcode" for each pathogen strain. A chemical analysis known as mass spectrometry would then identify the disease based on the barcode.

The technology would allow clinicians to identify pathogens directly from tissues like blood, urine, and wounds, without the need for cell culture. Not only would it offer superior performance to current treatment options, it would save patients from potentially harsh therapies.

On another front in the sepsis fight, Dr. Ernst was awarded a five-year, \$6.4 million contract last year from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to develop and test adjuvants that help vaccines protect against infection.

Honored as UMB's Researcher of the Year in 2017, he's regarded by colleagues inside and outside the University as an outstanding teacher, a prolific writer, and an original thinker who translates basic science into life-saving applications.

Public Servant of the Year

Michelle G. Giglio, PhD

School of Medicine

Associate Professor, Department of Medicine

Academic and Outreach Coordinator, Institute for Genome Sciences

For more than 10 years, Dr. Giglio has been passionate about promoting STEM to

underserved students in Baltimore. This work is done outside of her faculty responsibilities at the Institute for Genome Sciences (IGS), where she writes large federal grants and implements complex translation and analysis for IGS's active informatics ("big data") group. Dr. Giglio believes that if younger students from underserved city neighborhoods are exposed to a variety of science projects and the expansive range of science careers, they'll find avenues to pursue their interests and follow their dreams.

In 2014, she was invited to participate in the President's Outreach Council to help shape scientific programs for visiting students. When UMB launched the CURE Scholars Program in 2015, Dr. Giglio was an early advocate, volunteering her time with the initiative, which prepares middle and high school students in West Baltimore for careers in research, STEM, and health care.

She led a two-week, genomics-centered program for CURE's first summer camp in 2016 and has hosted weeklong programs each of the past three summers. With creativity and energy, Dr. Giglio develops full days of activities, including interactive games that get the scholars excited about science. Dr. Giglio also spreads the STEM wealth, hosting students from non-CURE schools throughout the city.

Researcher of the Year

David C. Gray, JD, PhD, MA
Francis King Carey School of Law
Jacob A. France Professor of Law

Dr. Gray's research focuses on criminal law, criminal procedure, constitutional theory, and transitional justice. Widely recognized for his influential scholarship, he's among the most cited authors from the Carey School of Law since joining the faculty in 2008.

Dr. Gray is the author of *The Fourth Amendment in the Age of Surveillance*, co-author of *Get a Running Start: Your Comprehensive Guide to the First Year Curriculum*, and co-editor of the *Cambridge Handbook of Surveillance Law*. In addition, he's published dozens of articles and book chapters in leading journals and is in demand as a speaker at prestigious institutions and conferences.

Dr. Gray was voted Professor of the Year at Carey Law in 2012-13 and works closely with students to develop and publish their work. He educates the public as well, frequently providing expert commentary for local and national media.

Dr. Gray has been admitted to the Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and District of Columbia bars. He also serves on the Law and Philosophy Committee of the American Philosophical Society and was elected to the American Law Institute. In all these circles, Dr. Gray has won praise for his expertise, his intellectual acuity, and his impeccable judgment.

Educator of the Year

Francis B. Palumbo, PhD, JD, MS
School of Pharmacy
Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research
Executive Director, Center on Drugs and Public Policy

Dr. Palumbo has been a valued member of the School of Pharmacy's faculty since 1974. Over the years, he's taught pharmacy management, medical care organization, health economics, and pharmacy law.

In the 1980s, Dr. Palumbo co-founded the school's distinguished graduate program in Pharmaceutical Health Services Research. He's mentored many master's and PhD students and taught courses in research methods and in drugs and public policy.

His pharmacy law class helps students prepare for the part of the pharmacist licensure exam that tests their knowledge of federal and state law. In addition, Dr. Palumbo and his colleagues annually hold a two-day law review session for School of Pharmacy graduates, graduates of other schools, and pharmacists from other states pursuing licensure in Maryland.

Dr. Palumbo is a member of the Maryland and District of Columbia bars and since 1995 has been an adjunct professor at the Carey School of Law, where he teaches a course in food and drug law. Students at both schools praise his deep knowledge of the subject matter, his thoughtful feedback on their papers, and his willingness to go the extra mile to help them with their research.

I'm so grateful we have Founders Week to showcase these remarkable colleagues and their remarkable achievements. I offer each winner my heartfelt thanks and congratulations.

For more on the Founders Week events, including the awards presentation at the Founders Gala on Saturday, Oct. 26, visit [The Elm](#) and [Founders Week](#) websites in the weeks to come.

Sincerely,

Jay A. Perman, MD
President