



Sept. 3, 2019

To the UMB Community:

As the 2019-20 school year gets underway, I welcome all of our students back to campus. The summer is much too quiet without you.

The beginning of every academic year is special for me, as I look at a calendar filled with events that bring us together in our scholarship and our practice, that offer us opportunities for conversation and collaboration, that celebrate the spirit and substance of our work, and call our attention to the work that remains -- always so much more than what we've achieved.

This year is especially meaningful for me. As I begin my 10th year as president of UMB, I'm reflecting on how far we've come in this last decade and how far we still might go. I'm reflecting on the initiatives that formed a vision of my presidency and where those initiatives stand today. This year, I'm thinking of one in particular.

As part of our 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, the University community identified seven *Core Values* that define UMB, that guide not what we do but how we do it. We launched a Core Values Speaker Series to gather perspectives on what collaboration, or accountability, or diversity means to leaders who founded their own life's work on exactly that. This year, our President's Fellows will be exploring how to institutionalize these Core Values at UMB, so that the values continue to anchor everything the University is and does long after all of us are gone from this special place. Meanwhile, a group of University leaders has chosen to study the Core Values as part of their yearlong professional development, and the Staff Senate has kicked off a Core Values campaign; this year's focus is civility. Our values challenge us every day to be the institution of our aspirations, and I look forward to mindfully rededicating ourselves to them.

If our Core Values speak to the "how" of our work, it is our mission that speaks to the "what." Five years ago, we distilled the "what" into its essence: Improve the human condition and serve the public good. *Everything* we do has its root and its flower in that mission. And there's not a day that goes by that we don't answer its call to courage, compassion, empathy, and humanity.

I know it's this mission that has made you choose UMB, made you choose to learn, work, and train here. And I hope it's this mission you remember when our will is tested as a community, as a state, as a nation. I hope it's this mission that makes you persevere through the catastrophes that break our hearts, and this mission that leads you to a life of action and of service. I hope this mission is your answer to the argument that there's little we can do in the face of grave challenges to health, well-being, and safety -- challenges that always most threaten the most vulnerable among us.

Because your work -- our work -- is the answer. Every day, it's the answer. I'm so glad you're here.

Sincerely,

Jay A. Perman, MD
President

This note was authorized for distribution to the University of Maryland, Baltimore community by the Office of the President.